MEMOIRS

OF THE

COURTS

OF

BERLIN, DRESDEN, WARSAW,
AND VIENNA,

In the Years 1777, 1778, and 1779.

By N. W. WRAXALL, Esq.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR T. CADELL JUN. AND W. DAVIES,
IN THE STRAND.
1799.

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LETTER XVIII.

Journey from Cracow to Warſaw.—Appearance of that capital.—Want of police and regulations.—The Viſtula.—Praga.—Signs of decay and ruin.—Jews.—Reflections on the ſtate of Poland.

WARSAW, *June* 28, 1778.

NO tract of country in Europe can offer fewer objects of information, curioſity, or amuſement, in the common acceptation of the terms, than that which extends from the gates of Cracow to the ſuburbs of Warſaw, a diſtance of at leaſt two hundred miles through the central provinces of Poland. It may however be juſtly ſaid, that the appearance of the

country itſelf, the aſpect of its inhabitants, and the face of every individual; excite reflexions, which if not pleaſing, are nevertheleſs important. In the midſt of a ſoil naturally rich and fertile, they are in want of common neceſſaries. I could ſcarcely procure bread in any of the wretched poſt-houſes at which I ſtopped, except of a kind ſo black, ſour, and execrable, as not to be eaten. Inns there are none which merit the name: but the Jews, who form the majority of the people in the villages, ſeem to keep alive the little ſubſiſting induſtry. The Poles, among whom depopulation, oppreſſion, and miſery, appear under every poſſible ſhape, manifeſt in their looks and whole appearance the utmoſt poverty: even the churches are compoſed of wood, and the hovels of the peaſants are of the ſame materials. I ſcarcely ſaw a nobleman's or gentleman's houſe of any kind; and the roads are either left in their natural ſtate, or are made, where the ground is marſhy, by fir trees laid acroſs them cloſe to each other,

as

as in Ruſſia. The very water is moſtly unwholeſome and ſtagnant. It muſt however be admitted that the poſts are tolerably well ſerved; and though the horſes are ſmall and weak, yet as numbers ſupply the defect of ſtrength, a traveller cannot reaſonably complain of the want of expedition. As I drew near Warſaw, I ſaw no marks of opulence, cultivation, or luxury, ſuch as uſually beſpeak the approach to a capital. A wide open plain, interſperſed with little woods of fir or birch, and equally deſtitute of natural as well as artificial beauty, extends quite to the entrance of the city.

This metropolis itſelf ſeems to me, like the Republic of which it is the head, to unite the extremes of civilization and of barbariſm, of magnificence and wretchedneſs, of ſplendor and miſery; but, unlike all other great cities of Europe, theſe extremes are not ſoftened, approximated, and blended by any intermediate gradations. The middle orders of men, who every where elſe form the moſt numerous claſs

of citizens, the moſt uſeful, and the moſt induſtrious, appear hardly to have any exiſtence here. Palaces and ſheds, the manſions of the great, and the cottages of the poor, compoſe excluſively the larger portion of Warſaw. It is like an aſſemblage of nobles and ſlaves, of lords and vaſſals, ſuch as the darkneſs of the middle ages when feudal tyranny prevailed univerſally, might have exhibited; but which, happily for mankind, is now no where to be ſeen except in Poland. Even Conſtantinople is in this reſpect far leſs barbarous; and the genius of the Ottoman government is more favourable to commerce, ingenuity, and the arts that humanize ſociety, than the city from which I am now writing. The deſpotiſm of one man, however pernicious, is yet leſs deſtructive than the tyranny of a thouſand petty deſpots; and the Turks, though fallen from their antient ſplendor, do not preſent a picture of national degradation or humiliation, ſuch as the Poles at preſent offer to the world.

As

As I walk through the ſtreets of Warſaw, I continually imagine myſelf in ſome ſcattered and half ruined village. All the municipal defects of Cracow exiſt here in a greater degree. I am no longer ſurpriſed that a King, in his own carriage, ſurrounded by guards and attendants, could be ſeized and carried off in the midſt of his capital, as was Staniſlaus ſcarcely ſeven years ago. In a city where there are no lamps in winter, and no precautions taken for general ſecurity, any deſperate banditti, protected by the night, may commit the moſt atrocious crimes. I am not amazed to hear Mr. Wroughton, the Engliſh Miniſter, ſay, that he has ſeen Prince Radzivil, one of the greateſt Poliſh noblemen, when coming to court in his own coach drawn by the fineſt ſet of horſes in the kingdom, ſo completely ſtuck faſt in the mire at a hundred yards from the Royal Palace, as to make it neceſſary for him to be taken out, and carried thither in the arms of his ſervants. At the cloſe of the

late reign, in 1763, Warſaw was almoſt wholly unpaved. Even at preſent, and in this ſeaſon of the year, after violent rain, many of the ſtreets are totally impaſſable on foot, and nearly ſo on horſeback, or in a carriage. The buildings are ſo irregular, ſcattered, and disjoined, that great ſpaces remain unoccupied, and even unlevelled, in the moſt frequented parts of the metropolis. In front of Staniſlaus's palace, ſo indecently neglected are the ſewers, that the ſmell is peſtilential. A nation too indolent to remedy ſuch nuiſances, or ſo accuſtomed to them as not to perceive how incompatible they are with ſafety, comfort, and ſalubrity, ſeems not far removed from barbariſm: yet, by a ſingular contradiction, Warſaw preſents under other aſpects all the refinement of Paris, the arts of Florence, and the ſplendor of Peterſburgh.

The Viſtula, though conſiderably broader than the Thames at Windſor, wants beauty, depth, and every artificial aid or improvement,

ment. Its ſides are in general low and ſandy; its channel obſtructed by banks which continually ſhift; and the colour of its waters is thick and muddy, like thoſe of the Tyber. The Poles ſeem ſcarcely to be conſcious that it is navigable; and it is rare to ſee upon it a veſſel of any kind. A bridge of boats laid acroſs the ſtream, conducts to Praga, a town or ſuburb on the eaſtern ſide. Praga is a wretched collection of cottages or huts, built of wood, and ſcattered irregularly in the ſand without order or plan; ſuch as Tartars, and only Tartars, would conſtruct or inhabit. Yet this is the principal object ſeen from the windows of the royal palace, which ſtands on the oppoſite bank. It is large, but cannot be eſteemed a regular, or a magnificent edifice. The two laſt Kings, Auguſtus the Second and Third, not chuſing to inhabit it, erected another, in which when at Warſaw they commonly reſided and held their court, "ſtill denominated from them, "the Saxon Palace." Hardly a

ſingle public monument of art, taſte, or devotion, exiſts in this metropolis. The very churches and palaces are unfiniſhed, or falling to decay. Among the latter are many which want inhabitants; not more than a fourth part of the great families who reſided here at the death of Auguſtus the Third, being now in a ſtate to maintain their dignity. Prince Radzivil's palace, one of the moſt ſuperb, is converted into a play-houſe. Such is the wretched ſtate of the capital of Poland; a country which previous to the late diſmemberment, was larger than the nine Circles of the German Empire.

The people accord in their appearance too well with the aſpect of every thing around them. I never beheld ſo many objects of horror or compaſſion, as preſent themſelves in the ſtreets: many of theſe are a diſgrace to humanity, as well as a reproach to the national police. Warſaw is likewiſe crowded with Jews, who form a conſiderable proportion of the inhabitants. They

wear

wear a diſtinguiſhing dreſs, and derive a very precarious ſubſiſtence from the arts of fraudulent commerce, moſt of them being extremely poor. From time to time they are plundered, exiled, impriſoned, and maſſacred: yet, under ſuch accumulated vexations, they continually multiply, and are here found in far greater numbers than even at Amſterdam.

After this diſguſting deſcription of Warſaw, you will be aſtoniſhed when I add, that notwithſtanding the picture of public miſery which it diſplays, I am highly pleaſed with it as a temporary reſidence. Many circumſtances conduce to render the place more than ordinarily agreeable to a ſtranger. The King is, of all the Princes whom I have ever ſeen, the moſt acceſſible, eaſy, pleaſing, and even captivating in his manners. I have been in his ſociety; and I am not ſurpriſed, when I conſider his perſon and addreſs, at the partiality of Catharine for Count Poniatowſki. The Poliſh nobility of both ſexes, whatever may be their eſſential defects

of

of character, want none of the exterior graces of deportment. In the palaces of the Oginſkis, Czartoriſkis, and numerous others, is ſtill to be found every diſplay of refinement, hoſpitality, and magnificence. Many of the great families continue to live in a ſtyle almoſt róyal, amidſt the ruins of their expiring country. In no court or capital of Europe are to be found men more accompliſhed, nor women more beautiful, poliſhed, and agreeable. As an Engliſhman, I have the greateſt perſonal obligations to Mr. Wroughton, his Majeſty's Miniſter, who has rendered my ſtay here at once delightful and informing. His long reſidence in Poland; his intimate acquaintance, or rather friendſhip with the King, both before and ſince his elevation to the throne; his perfect knowledge of this country, whoſe decline and partition he has witneſſed; the variety of curious and intereſting anecdotes with which his converſation abounds; theſe circumſtances, added to numerous proofs of his regard, have

in ſome meaſure reconciled me to the wretchedneſs which I ſee on all ſides.

I contemplate this country as the moſt inſtructive and awful of political leſſons: I even eſteem myſelf fortunate in being able to ſurvey it, before it ſinks and is eraſed from the liſt of nations, or is incorporated into the great ſurrounding monarchies; an event which, according to every appearance, cannot be very diſtant; and which is, indeed, now rather to be wiſhed than deprecated, even by the Poles themſelves. I may boaſt of having been able to aſcertain, from the higheſt ſources of information, the principal *external* cauſes which led to the partition of Poland: for, in the deteſtable and ruinous form of their conſtitution, muſt be ſought the *internal* ſource of all their national calamities. What elſe could rationally be expected, as the natural death of a country, where the crown is at once elective, venal, and powerleſs; where the nobility are independent, uncontrollable, and tyrannical; while

while the people are ſunk in ſlavery, ignorance, oppreſſion, and poverty? We ſhould rather wonder, that in the preſent progreſſive ſtate of Europe, Poland has laſted thus long, inſtead of being ſurpriſed at its ruin and approaching extinction. In my next letter I mean to delineate the immediate cauſes of that great event, the partition; as well as to conſider its effects, preſent and future. If it is not a pleaſing, it muſt at leaſt be admitted to form as momentous a ſubject of inveſtigation and reflexion, as ever was preſented to the human mind.

LETTER XIX.

Examination of the causes of the decline of Poland.—State of that country at the time of John Sobieski's death.—Change in the position of Europe at the decease of Augustus the Third.—Consequences of the death of the Empress Elizabeth of Russia.—Origin of the plan for the partition of Poland.—Developement and progress of that great event.—Interview of Neustadt in Moravia.—Accomplishment of the partition.—Its comparative advantages to Russia, Austria, and Prussia.—Probable destiny of Poland.—Internal and moral causes of its destruction.—Picture of the nobility.—Middle Orders.—Peasants.

WARSAW, *July* 3, 1778.

WHOEVER considers the state of Poland, and reflects on the nature of its government, will perceive, that while the surrounding Powers of the continent have been in a constant state of improvement or progression

ſion for near a century paſt, the Poles alone have been ſtationary. At the death of John Sobieſki, hardly more than eighty years ago, the Swedes and the Turks were the only formidable enemies of the Republic. Ruſſia, under Peter the Great, was juſt emerging from barbariſm, and become a member of the European ſyſtem. The Houſe of Brandenburg inſpired no apprehenſion, and had not then attained beyond the electoral dignity: while Auſtria, preſſed on one ſide by the Porte, and on the other by the arms of Louis the Fourteenth, could ſcarcely reſiſt two ſuch powerful antagoniſts. To the perſonal aſſiſtance and valour of Sobieſki, the Emperor Leopold had been recently indebted for his preſervation, when driven from his capital by the Ottoman forces. The immenſe ſtanding armies of modern times were then comparatively unknown; and Poland, under all the defects of its government political and civil, might ſtill repel invaſion, or maintain its independence.

But

But in the interval of near ſeventy years, which elapſed between the deceaſe of John Sobieſki, and that of the late King Auguſtus the Third, the face of Europe had totally changed. The Swedes, driven back by the Czar Peter beyond the Baltic, no longer maintained any political relations, except merely of amity, with the Republic of Poland: while the Turkiſh Empire, declining annually in ſtrength, could neither extend to it effectual aid, nor do it material injury. Other Powers had ariſen to ſupply the place of Sweden and Turkey. In October 1763, when the Saxon Line of Poliſh Sovereigns became extinct, Ruſſia, by the permanent conqueſt of Livonia, by her influence in Courland, and by her prodigious military force, might be ſaid to have acquired a domineering and almoſt irreſiſtible aſcendancy in the affairs of Poland. Thirty years earlier, in 1733, at the death of Auguſtus the Second, the Empreſs Anne had been able to raiſe his ſon to the throne, and to maintain him in it againſt all the efforts of

France,

France, aided by a party among the Poles themſelves. Elizabeth, her ſucceſſor, followed the ſame line of policy. Pruſſia, after a war of ſeven years, ſuſtained under circumſtances of unparalleled inferiority, had by a ſort of miracle extricated herſelf, and was likewiſe become a Power of the firſt conſideration. The talents of Frederic, his victories, and his ambition, rendered the Pruſſian monarchy peculiarly an object of attention, if not of terror. Laſtly, Maria Thereſa, though foiled in her attempt to recover Sileſia, poſſeſſed nevertheleſs immenſe reſources; and might, from her poſition, have a great influence on the deſtiny of Poland, either as an ally, or as an enemy.

At the time when the throne became vacant by the deceaſe of Auguſtus the Third, the three great Powers above mentioned had under their command a regular diſciplined military force, amounting together to above four hundred and fifty thouſand men. On the contrary, the Poliſh army, if it could properly be ſo termed, conſiſted

consisted rather in the prerogative with which the constitution vested the King, of calling out and arming the Nobility, if emergency required; than in any effective body of soldiery, paid, cloathed, and maintained by the state. It is indeed evident that if Russia, Austria, and Prussia, had chosen to dismember and divide Poland in 1763, as they did nine years later in 1772; no internal or effectual opposition could have been made by that Power, which would have finally prevented its accomplishment. The intractability, want of foresight, and infatuation of the Polish Grandees, who would see no object of jealousy except their own Sovereign, and take no precaution against external attack, left them at the mercy of any foreign combination.

While the Saxon Kings continued to reign, these evils were retarded and averted. They maintained themselves in the throne which they had originally purchased, by foreign alliances of marriage, consanguinity, and policy. If Elizabeth, Empress of Russia,

had ſurvived Auguſtus the Third, there is no doubt that the deſtiny of the north of Europe would have been totally changed. The Family of Saxony would probably ſtill have governed Poland; while Pruſſia would have inevitably been, if not diſmembered and divided, at leaſt conſiderably reduced in territory, revenue, and importance. Elizabeth had given public proofs of her reſolution to ſupport Auguſtus and his deſcendants. She had even raiſed one of his younger ſons, Prince Charles of Saxony, to the Dukedom of Courland, as an earneſt of her future exertions in favor of his Houſe. But the late King of Poland had the misfortune to outlive his ally and benefactreſs, juſt one and twenty months. Elizabeth expired in January 1762; and her death was the era from which dates the deſtruction of Poland. The reign of Peter, ſhort and tragical, was ſucceeded by that of Catharine. It was evident, from the age and infirmities of Auguſtus the Third, that the Poliſh crown muſt ſoon become vacant. If his ſon, the

Electoral

Electoral Prince, ſhould be choſen in his room, the Saxon Family could no longer be conſidered as elective, but in effect as hereditary; and all attempts to divide Poland would be ineffectual. The peace of Hubertſburg left his Pruſſian Majeſty at liberty to turn his views and efforts towards Warſaw. He well knew that the time was critical, and that every thing depended on the choice of a ſucceſſor.

Such were the circumſtances in which was conceived the project of the partition of Poland. I will relate to you from high and concurring teſtimonies, what I have collected relative to it, at Peterſburgh, Vienna, Berlin, and finally during my ſtay in this capital.

The plan unqueſtionably originated in the Cabinet of Pruſſia; but not with the King, nor with any of his miniſters. His brother Prince Henry's deep and capacious mind firſt ſeized, digeſted, and ripened it in ſilence. When he communicated his ideas on the ſubject to Frederic, that Mo-

narch, while he expreſſed his admiration of it in theory, conſidered it as impracticable, and oppoſed by too many obſtacles ever to be realized. Prince Henry on the other hand contended that by time, concealment, and dextrous management, it might be finally effected. He brought over the King to his opinion; and they began in concert the train of meaſures requiſite for its completion. The firſt ſtep taken, was artfully to flatter the new Empreſs of Ruſſia, to awaken her vanity, and to repreſent to her the honor, as well as advantage, of giving a Sovereign to Poland, after having placed herſelf on the throne of the Czars. Catharine liſtened with pleaſure to ſuggeſtions ſo well calculated to make impreſſion on a mind like hers, anxious for every ſpecies of glory. Impelled by her partiality for Count Poniatowſki, and perhaps likewiſe induced by her perfect knowledge of his character, ſhe ſignified to Frederic her intention of elevating him to the crown. The choice being approved at Berlin, on the

the deceafe of Auguftus, Catharine's forces and treafures overcame all oppofition. Staniflaus was elected by violence; while the Ruffian embaffador, Prince Repnin, became in fact the defpot and the oppreffor of the Poles. The unfortunate King retained little more of royalty than the name, and was only an engine in the hands of the Court of Peterfburgh.

Frederic, attentive to the accomplifhment of his objects, and who by no means meant that Poland fhould fink virtually into a Ruffian province, next fomented the difcontent of the great Polifh Nobility. By his emiffaries he fecretly ftimulated them to throw off fo ignominious a yoke, and to dethrone a Prince illegally elected, as well as unable to afford them protection againft the tyranny of Catharine. His infinuations were fuccefsful; and Poland foon became a theatre of civil war, of infurrection, and devaftation. In order to maintain Staniflaus on the throne, Mufcovites and Coffacks were quartered in all the principal cities; while

while Warſaw reſembled rather a Ruſſian garriſon, than the capital of an independent Republic. It was not difficult for Frederic to excite the jealouſy of the Turks at ſuch an interference; and to repreſent to them, that under pretence of reducing the Poliſh rebels to obedience, Catharine in effect rendered the country a province of her Empire. At the ſame time he encouraged and exhorted the Court of Peterſburgh to engage in hoſtilities with the Porte. No exertions were omitted in order to inflame the two Sovereigns, already irritated againſt each other. War enſued between them, and was proſecuted with various ſucceſs, in Aſia as well as in Europe.

The object to which his policy had ſo long tended, was now attained. Frederic having completely embroiled the Ruſſians and Turks, at the ſame time that the Poles, exhauſted by confederacies, added to the ravages of the plague, were incapable of reſiſtance; turned his attention next to the Court of Vienna.

Vienna. Nothing could be effected without the Auſtrian conſent and co-operation. With a view of ſtudying the character of Joſeph the Second, he therefore artfully cauſed a propoſition to be made on his part, for an interview between them. The Emperor accepted it; and the two Princes met at Neiſs in Sileſia, towards the end of Auguſt 1769. But though the ſtate of Poland was there mentioned in general terms, no plan or treaty for a partition of it took place. Whether matters were not then ſufficiently ripe, or that Frederic ſaw other obſtacles to its immediate completion; it was not till the following autumn, in 1770, that after previouſly ſounding the Imperial Cabinet, the ſubject was fully diſcuſſed in the ſecond interview of Frederic and Joſeph, at Neuſtadt in Moravia. Prince Kaunitz accompanied the Emperor thither for the expreſs purpoſe. His Pruſſian Majeſty, who knew that without the miniſter's approbation, he could not overcome the ſcruples of Maria Thereſa, religious as

well as political, exerted all his addreſs to win the Prince. At the opera Frederic conſtantly placed him by his ſide, took ſnuff from his box, and affected for him the moſt diſtinguiſhing conſideration. Joſeph was not difficult to be perſuaded; and Prince Kaunitz allowed himſelf to be convinced either of the policy, or of the neceſſity of the meaſure. They ſpread before them the map of Poland, agreed on their reſpective ſhares, and fixed on the tract of country to be offered to the Empreſs of Ruſſia. Theſe preliminaries being adjuſted, they parted.

In the courſe of the enſuing year appeared the fruits of the interview. By command of their reſpective Courts, the Auſtrian and Pruſſian miniſters at Peterſburgh ſignified to Catharine the determination of the Cabinets of Berlin and Vienna. They added at the ſame time, that the reſolution was taken on the part of thoſe Sovereigns to ſeize on the provinces allotted them: and it was plainly inſinuated, that if

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ſhe would not conſent, or choſe to reject her portion of the ſpoil, they knew how to compel her to it by force. The Empreſs, engaged in a war with the Porte which occupied all her forces, while it drained her treaſury, had no alternative left except acquieſcence. After a proper delay, in order to prepare manifeſtos, the armies of the three Powers, which had previouſly approached the frontiers of Poland, marched in, and ſequeſtered the territories. They then compelled the unfortunate Staniſlaus to convoke a Diet, in which he ratified his own degradation, by giving to their uſurpations the mock ſanction of legiſlative and deliberative conſent.

After having viewed the ſprings, and followed the movements of this extraordinary tranſaction, which is without precedent in modern hiſtory; it is natural to aſk which of the three Sovereigns has been the greateſt gainer by the diviſion. No doubt whatſoever can be entertained on the point, by ſuch as have examined or in-

quired with impartiality. Unqueſtionably it was not Catharine, ſince ſhe might be conſidered as already miſtreſs of Poland. Her troops and her embaſſador gave laws in Warſaw equally to the King and to the Republic. Courland was not more hers in effect, or more dependant on her orders. Every motive of policy dictated not to aggrandize two powerful European ſtates at the expence of Poland. The portion allotted to her is indeed a fertile, extenſive, and important tract of country, contiguous to her own dominions, and including a great part of Lithuania, as well as Poliſh Livonia: but comparatively eſtimated, it adds little to her revenues, power, or political importance.

The Auſtrian ſhare is locally, as well as financially conſidered, more valuable. By its poſition it covers Hungary and Moravia, while it extends the Imperial frontier to the diſtant confines of Podolia and Moldavia. The mines of Vielicza, which may enable the Empreſs Queen to

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ſupply all Poland with ſalt, form a conſiderable ſource of revenue; and the population cannot be eſtimated in thoſe provinces at a ſmaller number than two millions.

But theſe advantages, great as they muſt be ſeparately allowed in themſelves, ſink on a compariſon with the political benefits derived to Pruſſia from the partition of Poland. Even Sileſia was not, in my eſtimate, ſo vaſt or ſo ſolid an acquiſition as Poliſh Pruſſia. It ſuffices to look at its geographical poſition, in order to be convinced of the fact in all its force. Though leſs in extent than the Auſtrian and Ruſſian ſhares, it far exceeds them in fertility of ſoil, in number of cities, induſtry, and faculties of raiſing pecuniary ſupplies. Not only the Viſtula, from the gates of Thorn to thoſe of Dantzic, together with the whole commerce of that river, are become Pruſſian. The circumſtance which renders them ineſtimable to Frederic, is, that he has joined his electoral dominions of Brandenburg and the Duchy of Pomerania, to his kingdom of Pruſſia. He has realized

realized the "Regnum Balticum," without ſhedding a drop of blood; and he now ſtretches in an uninterrupted line, from the mouths of the Oder, along the ſouthern ſhore of the Baltic, to the frontiers of Courland and Samogitia.

Its future effects on Europe are incalculable. Catharine may continue to dictate her pleaſure in Warſaw; but Frederic, by holding the Viſtula in his poſſeſſion, retains the keys of Poland, and can prevent the importation or exportation of almoſt every article of trade. Dantzic and Thorn muſt, ſooner or later, become a part of his dominions. The Cabinet of Vienna will one day perceive, that in conſenting to the partition of Poland, they violated not leſs the laws of true policy, than of morality and juſtice. They were in fact overreached by his Pruſſian Majeſty at the interview of Neuſtadt, notwithſtanding the ſpecious advantages with which he dazzled Joſeph, and deluded Prince Kaunitz. Probably they are already ſenſible, when too late, of their error; and would gladly re-

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ſtore their own plunder, if it were poſſible to reduce Frederic to his former ſituation.

The final deſtiny of this diſmembered and impoveriſhed country, forms a curious and intereſting ſubject of inquiry, doubt, and ſpeculation. Will the Crown of Poland and the Republic long continue to exiſt even in name? Will the Family of Poniatowſki be rendered hereditary? May not circumſtances poſſibly ariſe, that ſhall again reſtore to Poland her provinces? Or may not her total deſtruction, and the incorporation of her remaining territory with the three great ſurrounding monarchies, be an event neither diſtant nor improbable? Theſe queſtions would lead me too far; and on one of them I may have occaſion to ſay ſomething, when I ſpeak of the King, and his nephew Prince Staniſlaus. If however appearances may be truſted, there is ſtrong reaſon to believe, that the final diſſolution of Poland cannot be very remote; though the preciſe time muſt naturally be accelerated or retarded by a variety of circumſtances.

cumſtances. Even the Poles themſelves ſee it as inevitable, and admit that in the wretched condition of their country, it is a conſummation rather to be deſired than deprecated by every individual.

In addition to the radical defects of the conſtitution, which irreſiſtibly operated to ſink Poland below the level of the neighbouring ſtates, and to deprive it of the means of reſiſtance againſt foreign violence; the moral principles of its diſſolution are ſo numerous, as to leave little hope of remedy or of reſuſcitation. The great Nobility are depraved, corrupt, and deſtitute of enlightened patriotiſm: their education and habits extinguiſh every ſpark of public virtue. In their infancy they are ſurrounded by domeſtics or preceptors, who nouriſh thoſe fatal prejudices and ideas of ſuperiority, ſo calculated to harden the human heart. Even while in their cradles, the peaſants are brought to kiſs their feet, and to ſhew them marks of homage. They are taught to regard their vaſſals as creatures

of a ſeparate ſpecies. On the other hand, they are not brought up in principles of obedience to the laws, or of deference to the Sovereign, and to the civil Magiſtrate. How can they be ſo, in a country where the courts of juſtice are corrupt, mercenary, and venal beyond imagination; where the Crown, at the death of every Sovereign, is bought or transferred by violence; and where the puniſhment of crimes is almoſt unknown! Aſſaſſinations, robberies, frauds, divorces on the moſt frivolous pretences, invaſions of property, and a rage for play which knows no limits; theſe infractions of public and private order are committed with impunity among the higher claſſes. A total diſſolution of morals is the inevitable conſequence. Even the ſenſe of ſhame, and dread of infamy, anterior and ſuperior to all written law, ſeem here to have loſt much of their force, and ſcarcely to operate as reſtraints.

If ſuch is the ſtate of the upper orders, no reſource is to be found in the people. The

The very term is inapplicable; for there is in fact *no Polish people.* Never was the title of *Republic* so abused and prostituted: as well might the name be applied to Algiers or to Tunis. Of the intermediate rank of citizens, merchants, artizans, and mechanics, the numberis so small and inconsiderable, that they may be regarded as non-existent to any beneficial purpose. In a country where commerce is extinct; manufactures, except those of the first necessity, nearly unknown; industry discouraged; arts unprotected; and only the cultivation of the ground that can be considered as in any manner flourishing; the middle class of men must necessarily diminish, and be of no account. The peasants are indeed a numerous body, though much reduced by successive years of anarchy, famine, and calamity: but they remain in the same state of poverty, vassalage, and ignorance, which has been their invariable lot during many ages. Attached to the glebe, and sold with it, they are equally strangers to the name

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and to the poſſeſſion of freedom. Inured to domeſtic ſervitude, it may even be queſtioned whether they are capable of receiving ſuch a preſent, except by inſenſible gradations. A conſiderable lapſe of time, the introduction of arts, and the general diffuſion of knowledge, could alone render them able to improve the bleſſing of civil liberty, or elevate them to the rank of ſubjects from the condition of ſlaves. Such a change is, I fear, beyond either hope or calculation; and whatever may be the final deſtiny of this unfortunate country, the greater part of its inhabitants will probably continue to exiſt in nearly the ſame ſtate of political and perſonal degradation. Here I ſhall finiſh this letter, and remain, &c.

LETTER XX.

Origin and history of the family of Poniatowski.—Anecdotes of the father of Stanislaus Augustus.—Particulars of the life of Count Poniatowski previous to his election to the crown of Poland.—His elevation to the throne.—His conduct in the beginning of his reign.—Luxury, pleasures, and profusion of the court.—Miserable state of Poland.—Account of the attempt to assassinate Stanislaus, and his escape.—Punishment of the conspirators.—Conduct of the King on the partition of Poland.—Character, personal qualities, defects, and anecdotes of Stanislaus.—His private life.—Family.—Uncertainty of his future destiny.

WARSAW, *July* 17, 1778.

AFTER having traced the causes which led to the partition of Poland, and endeavoured to investigate its consequences, immediate as well as remote, it is natural to turn towards the King. As an elective sovereign, without queen or descendants, he

he ſtands alone; and in whatever point of view we conſider him, he is an object of intereſt: raiſed from the condition of a private nobleman or gentleman to a throne, maintained in it by foreign ſupport, eſcaped by a ſort of miracle from the hands of aſſaſſins, and ſtill nominally the head of a diſmembered and expiring monarchy; all the incidents of his hiſtory awaken attention. His amiable perſonal qualities, the precarious nature of his preſent ſituation, and the uncertainty of his future deſtiny, excite regard and curioſity blended with compaſſion. Never was any prince leſs an object of envy. I have had opportunities of ſeeing him, and of forming ſome opinion of his character from my perſonal obſervation: but it is from much higher ſources of information that I ſhall ſpeak of Staniſlaus; they have been ſo ample, as rather to leave me under an embarraſſment what to conceal, than what to diſcloſe. Before I mention him perſonally, it may not be

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improper to ſay ſomething of his deſcent, and of his connexions.

The family of Poniatowſki is noble, and conſequently like that of every "Stolnick," or private gentleman, is eligible to the crown: neither commerce nor ſervitude diſqualify for the elevation. On the day when Staniſlaus was choſen King, Mr. Wroughton, the Engliſh miniſter at Warſaw, was ſtruck with ſurpriſe at ſeeing his butler put on a ſabre, and, without aſking his permiſſion, walk out to the "Szopa." This ſpot is the place where the ceremony of electing the Poliſh Sovereigns is performed, about half an Engliſh mile from the capital. "Sir," ſaid the man to him, by way of apology for his conduct, "I am "noble; and though I act in the capacity "of one of your domeſtics, I am not leſs "competent to be raiſed to the throne, than "the firſt nobleman in the republic." In effect, the preſent King's deſcent on the paternal ſide is by no means illuſtrious. It is well atteſted, and univerſally acknowledged, that

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his grandfather, who was very poor, poſſeſſed ſcarcely any patrimony. Far from arriving at, or aſpiring to any public honours and dignities, he acted in the humble capacity of an overſeer or ſteward.

His ſon, the late Count Poniatowſki, who firſt raiſed the family from obſcurity, was not only a very diſtinguiſhed and celebrated perſon, uncommonly graceful in his figure, but endowed with great qualities of mind. When young he married a noble lady of high extraction, the Counteſs Oginſka, though the marriage was never avowed, nor was ſhe known in the world by any other name than that of Oginſka. He afterwards became colonel of the Swediſh guards of Staniſlaus Leczinſki, King of Poland; accompanied Charles the Twelfth at the unfortunate battle of Pultowa; and ſaved that monarch after the action, from falling into the hands of the Czar Peter, by his perſonal exertions, which Voltaire has commemorated and immortalized. On his return from Bender to his native coun-

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try, Poniatowſki, about the year 1720, eſpouſed the Princeſs Conſtantia Czartoriſka, ſiſter to the preſent Prince of that name. Though ſhe brought him only an inconſiderable fortune, and was little favoured by nature in the article of perſonal beauty, yet the alliance with ſo powerful and opulent a family contributed much to his elevation. After having taken no mean part in the adminiſtration of Poland during the two reigns of Auguſtus the Second and Third, under whom he filled ſome of the higheſt offices; he died about twenty years ago, at an advanced age, in eminent reputation for his talents and virtues.

Of four ſons whom he left behind him by the Princeſs Czartoriſka, his preſent Majeſty, Staniſlaus Auguſtus, is the ſecond. In the ſpring of the year 1757, when juſt twenty-five years old, the intereſt of his family procured him from the late King of Poland, an appointment to the court of Peterſburgh in a public capacity. Not indeed, as envoy from the Crown and Re-

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public; but as the minifter of Auguftus exclufively to the Emprefs Elizabeth, in which quality he took an oath before his departure, to fupport and maintain the interefts of the Saxon family. They afterwards complained loudly of his breach of faith and honor, when they difcovered that inftead of endeavouring to perpetuate the Polifh crown in Auguftus's line, which was the great object of his miffion; he had, by his intrigues with the Great Duchefs, laid the foundations of his own future exaltation to that dignity.

Previous to his fetting out for Ruffia, he obtained, not without difficulty, after much folicitation on the part of himfelf and his friends, the order of knighthood of the "White Eagle," then the only one exifting in Poland. A very fingular circumftance took place at his inveftiture, the notoriety of which leaves no doubt of its truth, and which every perfon in Warfaw with whom I ever converfed on the fubject, is ready to confirm. When the Sovereign

vereign confers the order, it is cuſtomary with the riband to give likewiſe the ſtar, round which is embroidered the device. The motto of *the King*, is different from that of *the ſubject*; the former being,

"Pro fide, *Grege*, lege;"

whereas the knights wear it,

"Pro fide, *Rege*, lege."

By an accident which never happened before, inſtead of a ſtar bearing the device as worn by the ſubject, a royal ſtar had been given to Count Poniatowſki. The miſtake was not immediately diſcovered; but when it reached Count Bruhl, the firſt miniſter of Auguſtus, he inſtantly redemanded the inſignia of the order, as having been inadvertently conferred, and they were of courſe reſtored. The affair excited much remark at the time; and when Staniſlaus afterwards aſcended the throne, it was recollected, and conſidered as an omen of his future fortune.

Count

Count Poniatowſki, on his arrival at Peterſburgh, ſoon became perſonally acceptable to the Great Ducheſs Catharine, who then led a retired life in the court of Elizabeth, by whom ſhe was not beloved. That the connexion between her and Staniſlaus was of the cloſeſt and tendereſt nature, no doubt can be entertained. Even at this hour the King, when he ſpeaks of her to thoſe with whom he is unreſerved, mentions her as an object of his warmeſt attachment as a woman, not leſs than of his admiration and reſpect as a Sovereign. How far, during the period to which I allude, ſhe might have given him hopes or aſſurances of her ſupport whenever the crown of Poland ſhould become vacant, it is difficult to ſay with preciſion. Any ſuch promiſes could only have been contingent, vague, and almoſt viſionary, ſince her own elevation to the throne of Ruſſia was then by no means a probable event. Yet, that ſhe did hold out to him ſuch proſpects, is univerſally believed and aſſerted here. She

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ſaw that Elizabeth, who declined in health, might not long continue to reign. The weakneſs and incapacity of Peter, ſhe was likewiſe aware, would probably open a way for herſelf to the ſupreme power. Auguſtus the Third was ſinking in years, and at his death the Ruſſians muſt neceſſarily have the preponderating influence at Warſaw, in naming a ſucceſſor. Under theſe circumſtances ſhe certainly might, and probably did aſſure him of her exertions in his favor, if ſhe ſhould be able to afford him effectual aſſiſtance.

So convinced were the Saxon miniſters of Staniſlaus's carrying on ſome ſecret negotiations or projects in concert with the Great Ducheſs, to the prejudice of Auguſtus's intereſts, that they recalled him from Peterſburgh. Prince Charles of Saxony then reſided in the court of Elizabeth, by whom he was much cheriſhed and protected. Catharine, inconſolable at the intelligence, condeſcended to apply to the Prince, and beſought his interpoſition with the King his

father, to allow Poniatowſki's continuance in Ruſſia. He, who was then in high favor with the Empreſs, and recently raiſed by her to the dignity of Duke of Courland, refuſed to gratify the Great Ducheſs; or to interfere in favor of her lover. Staniſlaus reluctantly quitted Peterſburgh; but Catharine never forgave the rejection of her requeſt, and ſeverely revenged it on the Houſe of Saxony.

After the deceaſe of Elizabeth, Peter the Third, during his ſhort reign, extended his views to Poland. He had even deſtined the crown, whenever it ſhould become vacant, for Prince Adam Czartoriſki, couſin by the maternal ſide to Staniſlaus; a young nobleman, who from his deſcent, immenſe expectations, and alliances, might well pretend to ſuch an elevation. But the depoſition of Peter in the ſame year, opened a new ſcene; and it was followed by the death of Auguſtus the Third, who expired at Dreſden in October 1763. Catharine inſtantly turned her principal

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cipal attention towards Warſaw. Eleven months of interregnum elapſed before the vacant throne was filled, and her choice long appeared to be doubtful. Various Poliſh noblemen were propoſed as candidates: at length Prince Repnin the Ruſſian ambaſſador named Staniſlaus Count Poniatowſki, as the fortunate object of the Empreſs's ſelection. It is not my intention to enter upon this part of his ſtory, which is matter of hiſtorical publicity. Force having overruled the deliberations of the Diet, and ſilenced all oppoſition, Staniſlaus was declared King.

His election might be conſidered in fact as not more illegal than the three preceding ones; in each of which Saxon, Swediſh, or Muſcovite troops, aided by gold, had raiſed the pretender whoſe cauſe they eſpouſed, to the throne of Poland. But in all former inſtances, the foreign interference was either immediately withdrawn; or better concealed after the elevation of the ſucceſsful candidate, in whoſe behalf

behalf it had been employed. Catharine the Second did not imitate the moderation of her predeceſſor the Empreſs Anne in this reſpect. Far from meaning to render Staniſlaus independent of her protection; on the contrary, ſhe clearly manifeſted her intention to retain him in her immediate dependence, and to govern Poland as a province, under the forms of a free Republic. Her troops, quartered in the vicinity of Warſaw, equally awed the Sovereign whom ſhe had created, and the nation which ſhe oppreſſed. Accuſtomed as the Poles had always been to external interference, they were not broken down to ſlavery. Reſiſtance, confederations, inſurrections, and civil war under every form, laid waſte the country; while the King remained a paſſive or a helpleſs ſpectator of the multiplied calamities inflicted on his unfortunate ſubjects.

The firſt years of his reign, from 1764 to 1767, were nevertheleſs devoted almoſt entirely to pleaſure and diſſipation; a conduct the more culpable and cenſurable,

as he had already paſſed the period of human life at which the violence of the paſſions may be pleaded in excuſe. When crowned in November 1764, he wanted only two months of thirty-three years complete. Inſtead of adopting meaſures which indicated vigor of mind, and which might lead to his emancipation, Staniſlaus confirmed his political chains, by manifeſting a diſpoſition at once yielding, indolent, and ſubmiſſive. No economy was obſerved in his expences, and no limits affixed to his profuſion. Three parties on his acceſſion diſputed the government of the new monarch. At the head of the firſt were his two uncles, the Princes Czartoriſki, whoſe advanced age, high rank, and character ſeemed to point them out as the proper conductors of their nephew. They did in fact enjoy for ſome time a conſiderable degree of power and influence. The ſecond faction conſiſted of his Majeſty's three brothers; the Great Chamberlain, the General, and the Abbé, now Biſhop of Ploczko. The third was

composed

composed of the ladies of the court, among whom the principal figure was the Princess Lubomirska, daughter to Prince Czartoriski. Her personal attractions, accomplishments, and intimate connexion with the King her cousin, gave her an ascendancy over him, which did not tend to raise him in the public estimation.

While clouds were collecting on every side, regardless of futurity he passed the greater part of his time among women, occupied in pursuits of gallantry, in puerile amusements, or in luxurious exhibitions of taste and magnificence. Far from acquiring in his character of a Sovereign, the esteem of his subjects, he did not even retain the good opinion of the Empress; who, it is evident, well knew how to appreciate the qualities and talents of her former lover. When Count Rzewuski, who is now "Marechal de la Cour," was at Petersburgh some years ago, Catharine conversing with him on the subject of Stanislaus, "Le Roi mon "maitre," said Rzewuski, "prend Henri "Quatre pour son modele."—"Apparem-

"ment,"

" ment," anſwered the Empreſs, " ce n'eſt " que dans ſes foibleſſes qu'il veut imiter le " Roi de France."

If the preſent King had poſſeſſed a ſtrong and vigorous mind; if to economy he had added policy, deciſion, and energy of character, it is probable that Poland might have been preſerved from total ruin. But, had he been caſt in ſuch a mould, Catharine, inſtead of placing him on the throne, would doubtleſs have ſeduloufly excluded him from it. An obvious means of ſtrengthening and ſupporting himſelf againſt the Ruſſian tyranny, was by a foreign matrimonial alliance. Its expediency was ſtrongly inculcated by his real friends, who urged him to open a negotiation for the purpoſe. It is with reaſon believed that he might have obtained the hand of a princeſs of Saxony. Such a connexion would perhaps have tended eventually to conciliate the Cabinet of Vienna, without whoſe approbation and participation, the diſmemberment of the kingdom could not have taken place.

place. But Staniſlaus never would be induced to make the requiſite demand to the Court of Dreſden. He was diſſuaded from it by the ladies who ſurrounded him, and who dreaded the extinction of their influence on the arrival of a foreign queen. There is not any probability that he will now ever be married; nor if he were ſo, that it could have any political conſequences. The deſtiny of Poland is irrevocably decided.

Entertainments of the moſt ſtudied luxury, comedies, operas, and all the diverſions of an effeminate or diſſolute court, occupied every moment, and ſeemed to leave him no time for any ſerious buſineſs. Theſe ſpectacles emptied the royal coffers, and plunged the King, though his revenue was ample, into a ſtate of poverty. Many of them coſt very conſiderable ſums, and in taſte might vie with the moſt ſplendid exhibitions of the laſt or preſent century. The courtiers in their turn gave ſimilar entertainments for the amuſement of the Sovereign.

vereign. A grandſon of Auguſtus the Second, Count Moſzinſki, (with whoſe mother I am well acquainted at Dreſden,) was conſtituted at once favorite, miniſter, and director of the royal pleaſures. He poſſeſſed great delicacy of fancy; his prodigality knew no bounds; and after having expended his whole fortune in a ſhort time, he now ſubſiſts wholly on the bounty of Staniſlaus. In one of the ſuperb fêtes given by Moſzinſki to his maſter, there ſeems to have been combined every variety which an elegant imagination could invent or aſſemble. Mr. Wroughton, who was preſent at moſt or all of them, favoured me with a deſcription of the one in queſtion, which I ſhall repeat, as it will convey to you ſome idea of Poliſh manners and magnificence.

It took place in ſummer, and conſiſted of ſixty perſons; thirty of each ſex. After a ſumptuous repaſt, a comedy was performed in a building conſtructed expreſsly for the occaſion. The whole company,

habited

habited in fancy dreſſes, next embarked in barges on the Viſtula, attended by bands of muſic. An iſland, fortified and defended by women in the dreſs of Amazons, the Queen at their head, having preſented itſelf to the view, a mock combat enſued, in which the King was the principal aſſailant. They did not however make a long or obſtinate reſiſtance; and Hyppolita, followed by her female train, laid their ſpears at the feet of the royal Theſeus; for whoſe diverſion they then exhibited an opera. A ſupper and a ball ſucceeded: while on other iſlands in the ſtream of the Viſtula were diſplayed fire-works and illuminations. It muſt be admitted that nothing more claſſically elegant could have been given by the Princes of the Houſe of Medicis, at Piſa or at Florence. But ſuch amuſements were ill ſuited to Staniſlaus's pecuniary reſources. The expence of the evening did not fall ſhort of near ſix thouſand pounds ſterling; and in the courſe of one year the King laid out

about forty-five thoufand pounds in theatrical or mufical exhibitions.

Mr. Wroughton, who had known Stanislaus in a private ftation, and had always lived with him on terms of the moft intimate familiarity; beheld with regret his profufion, and determined to remonftrate with him. Ufing the freedom of an old and faithful friend, he ventured to reprefent to his Majefty the imprudence of fuch expence, which, while it impoverifhed himfelf, obliged no one. The King was far from being offended; but he attempted to juftify it as political, fince it tended to render him popular by conciliating the affections of his fubjects. "I imitate," faid he, "my great "predeceffor Auguftus the Second, one of "the moft amiable of princes, who difplay-"ed the fame profufion from fimilar mo-"tives." It was in vain that the Englifh Minifter endeavoured to convince him how ill the precedent applied: Staniflaus continued incorrigible. He lavifhed immenfe fums at the fame time in conftructing a palace

palace at Ujaſdow, which I went to ſee ſome days ago, and which exhibits at this moment a monument of folly and prodigality. Ujaſdow ſtands on a hill, about three quarters of a mile from Warſaw, and was begun by Auguſtus the Second; at whoſe deceaſe it fell to a prince of the Lubomirſki family, from whom it was purchaſed by Staniſlaus. However incredible it may appear, there is no doubt that he has expended above two hundred thouſand pounds on the edifice. It is a prodigious pile of building, reſembling more a convent than a palace, unfiniſhed, ruinous, and will probably remain for ever uninhabited.

In the midſt of theſe occupations, if ſuch they can be deemed, Poland became a ſcene of mortality, inſurrection, and carnage. Many thouſand perſons were carried off by the plague. The confederate nobles, who maintained the illegality of the King's election, endeavoured at once to depoſe him, and to expel their oppreſſors the Ruſſians. Saxony

 furniſhed

furnifhed them pecuniary fupplies, and the plunder of fuch provinces or towns as refufed to join them, contributed to fupport their troops. The cabinet of Berlin fanned the flames, while France and Auftria extended to the infurgents indirect affiftance in men or in money. But, though embarraffed by the war in which fhe was engaged with the Turks, Catharine repreffed the Poles, cut in pieces their confederacies, and afferted her fuperiority. To fo wretched a ftate was the country reduced, that Staniflaus hardly efteemed himfelf fafe in Warfaw; and at the diftance of a league from the metropolis in every direction, had he ventured fo far, he would have been carried off by the rebels. His fituation was, it muft be owned, the moft helplefs and humiliating; fince he owed his crown folely to the Ruffians, and a murmur on his part againft their exceffes, might precipitate him from the eminence to which they had raifed him. Even his remonftrances to them againft the outrages which they committed, were

were treated with disregard, or heard with indifference.

On the other hand, no resource presented itself in the affection or loyalty of his subjects. To the confederates, as they denied his title, and detested his person, he could not fly for refuge. Such was their antipathy to him, that they resolved to put him to death, as the primary author of the calamities of his country, and as a man wholly dependent on Catharine the Second, their enemy and their tyrant. They executed their purpose in part, with astonishing audacity and success; though it is difficult to say what benefit could have accrued to them, or to Poland, from the destruction of Stanislaus, if it had been effected. The Empress would easily have substituted in his place another phantom of royalty, had such a one been requisite; and her victorious forces would not less have suppressed every effort on their part at emancipation. The attempt to assassinate the King was in itself an event so extraordinary,

and all the circumſtances attending it are ſo incredible, that I ſhall give it in detail from indiſputable authorities.

Pulawſki, a Poliſh nobleman, who commanded one of the many bodies of the confederate troops, by which the country was then ravaged and deſolated, firſt ſet on foot the enterpriſe to aſſaſſinate Staniſlaus. He is acknowledged by the Ruſſians themſelves to have been a leader of eminent military talents, which he diſplayed on a variety of occaſions. Having choſen three chiefs for conducting the attempt, named Lukawſki, Strawinſki, and Koſinſki, he allowed them to ſelect thirty-ſeven other aſſociates for its execution, the whole band being about forty in number. Willing to add the ſolemnity of a religious obligation, to the motives of intereſt, and the hopes of reward; Pulawſki made the three chiefs take an oath, their hands joined between his, either to deliver the King alive into his poſſeſſion, or in caſe that ſhould be impoſſible, to put him to death. This

ceremony

ceremony took place at the town of Czeſtochow, in Great Poland. Durini, who is now Vice-legate at Avignon, and who was then the papal Nuncio at the Court of Warſaw, being at Czeſtochow, lent his ſanction to the enterpriſe. Inſtigated by furious zeal againſt the Diſſidents, whom he deteſted as heretics, and believed to be protected by Staniſlaus; he even proceeded further, and beſtowed his benediction on the weapons delivered to the conſpirators. The preſent age ſcarcely can furniſh ſo ſtriking an inſtance of ſanguinary bigotry, which reſembles rather the ſpirit of the times of Catharine of Medicis, than that of a period diſtinguiſhed for religious toleration, and almoſt indifference.

The conſpirators, thus doubly furniſhed with ſpiritual and temporal arms, left Czeſtochow, and ſet out for Warſaw. But it was by no means eaſy to obtain entrance into the city, which, though not fortified, was ſurrounded with lines thrown up to prevent the introduction of the plague; and

at different parts of which, Ruſſian or Poliſh ſentinels were ſtationed. In order to ſurmount the impediment, they had recourſe to ſtratagem. On the ſecond of November 1771, they diſguiſed themſelves as peaſants; their ſaddles, arms, and cloaths being concealed under the hay which they brought in waggons. The artifice completely ſucceeded; and as their numbers expoſed them every moment to diſcovery, it was determined not to poſtpone the execution of the attempt. Circumſtances particularly favourable enabled them to proceed to action on the following night.

The King, upon that evening, which happened to be a Sunday, the third of November, had paid a viſit to his uncle, Prince Czartoriſki, grand chancellor of Lithuania. Between nine and ten o'clock he ſet out to return to the palace, which is not much more than a quarter of a mile diſtant, through the moſt frequented and populous ſtreets of Warſaw. The night was extremely dark, and, as I have already obſerved,

ſerved, the capital of Poland has no lamps. Staniſlaus had in the coach with him an aide-du-camp of the name of Poniatowſki, a diſtant relation of his family; and about fifteen or ſixteen attendants accompanied the carriage, ſome of whom were armed with ſwords or ſabres. Scarcely had he proceeded two hundred paces from Prince Czartoriſki's, when the coach was ſurrounded by a band of men, who commanded the poſtillion to ſtop on pain of inſtant death. They, at the ſame time, fired a number of ſhots into the carriage, ſeveral of which paſſed through his Majeſty's fur cloak. I have examined it, and ſeen the holes made in it by the bullets, which ſufficiently atteſt the magnitude of the danger. It ſeems almoſt miraculous that he ſhould have then eſcaped without a wound of any kind.

Among the train of attendants who followed the coach, only one, a Heyduque, attempted to reſiſt, or to defend his maſter. He was ſhot in that gallant act, and expired

next

next morning of the wound which he received. I ought not to omit that he was a proteſtant, and that the King allows a penſion to his widow and family. But his example was not imitated by any other of the perſons preſent, who flying in different directions, abandoned their Sovereign to his fate. Even the aide-du-camp, who had the honour to be ſeated with Staniſlaus in the carriage, ignominiouſly forſook him, and concealed himſelf from the rage of the aſſaſſins, by taking ſhelter under a little wooden bridge laid acroſs the gutter of the ſtreet. He is become, as he merited, univerſally deſpicable, and now lives obſcurely in Lithuania.

Meanwhile the King, who ſeems never to have loſt his preſence of mind throughout the whole tranſaction, finding that he was left nearly alone in the midſt of the ruffians, opened the door of the carriage, with deſign to effect, if poſſible, his eſcape. The darkneſs of the night favoured the attempt, and he had already got out of the

coach, when the aſſaſſins ſeized him by the hair, exclaiming in Poliſh, with horrible execrations, "We have thee now: thy hour is come!" One of them diſcharged a piſtol at him ſo cloſe, that he felt the heat of the flaſh; while another cut him ſo ſeverely acroſs the head with his ſabre, that it penetrated to the ſkull. They then laid hold of his Majeſty by the collar, and two among them mounting on horſeback, dragged him along the ground between their horſes, at full gallop, for near five hundred paces, through the ſtreets of Warſaw. However wonderful it may appear, they met with no impediment or oppoſition. A Ruſſian ſentinel, at ſome diſtance from the place where they firſt ſtopped and ſeized the King, hearing a noiſe, called to them; but, as they anſwered, or pretended to anſwer in his own language, he allowed them to paſs, conceiving them to be a Ruſs patrole.

All was confuſion and diſorder during this time at the Palace, where the ſcattered

and

and terrified domeſtics had carried the alarm. The foot-guards ran immediately to the ſpot whence Staniſlaus had been forced away; but, finding nothing except his hat all bloody, and the bag of his hair, they concluded that he was murdered. Throughout the capital univerſal conſternation prevailed, and the conſpirators profited of the terror, to bear away their prize. Perceiving however, that he was not able to follow them longer on foot, and that he had already almoſt loſt his reſpiration from the violence with which they had dragged him along, they ſet him on horſeback. They then redoubled their ſpeed, from the fear of being overtaken. Arriving at the ditch or lines drawn round Warſaw, they compelled him to leap his horſe acroſs, in performing which the animal fell twice, and at the ſecond fall broke his leg. Regardleſs of the circumſtance, they immediately mounted his Majeſty on another, covered as he was with blood and dirt.

The

The principal difficulties of the enterprife feemed now to be at an end, fince they had got clear of the metropolis: but the darknefs of the night, which had hitherto facilitated its fuccefs, impeded its completion; and the precipitation of the chiefs, who, inftead of terminating the bufinefs, were anxious to claim their refpective fhares of merit in its execution, finally extricated the King. No fooner had he paffed the lines, than they all fell upon him, and began to plunder him; Lukawfki tearing off with his own hand the riband of the order of the "Black Eagle," which Staniflaus wore round his neck, and the diamond crofs appendant to it. His motive for this act of violence, was not fo much to poffefs himfelf of the King's effects; as to prove to Pulawfki and the Confederates, that Staniflaus was a prifoner in their hands, already on his way to the army. The riband of the "Black Eagle," which had been conferred by the King of Pruffia on his Polifh Majefty when Count Poniatowfki, would

would be, he conceived, an inconteſtable evidence to his employers. Lukawſki then quitted the King, as did Strawinſki, and a great number of their followers, who carried the intelligence to their reſpective leaders; leaving Staniſlaus in the cuſtody of Koſinſki, and ſix of the band. Of all the articles in his Majeſty's pockets, only his tablets eſcaped their rapacity; and he requeſted of them to leave him his handkerchief, which they did without difficulty.

After the departure of Lukawſki, and ſo many of his aſſociates, the remaining conſpirators, headed by Koſinſki, continued their flight; but, as they could diſtinguiſh nothing on account of the darkneſs, and were beſides unacquainted with the ground, they knew not which way to direct their courſe. At every ſtep, from the inequality, or the ſlippery nature of the fields, through which they wandered, the horſes were unable to keep their legs: they therefore obliged the King to follow them on foot, with only one ſhoe, the

other

other being loſt in the dirt. Finding, nevertheleſs, that they only ſtrayed through the meadows, and apprehenſive of being overtaken, they again placed him on horſeback, two of them holding him each by the hand, and a third leading his horſe by the bridle. From the time of their paſſing the lines, the inferior conſpirators inceſſantly demanded of Koſinſki, whether the moment was not arrived in which to put the King to death. Their demands became more eager and clamorous, in proportion to the increaſe of the difficulties which ſeemed to prevent their eſcape.

It is impoſſible, on a review of the whole tranſaction, not to allow that Staniſlaus was cool and maſter of himſelf, under circumſtances ſo calculated to bereave him of his uſual recollection. Perceiving that his conductors were taking a path which would lead them to a village named Burakow, in which ſome Ruſſians were ſtationed, he warned them not to enter it, and apprized them

them of the danger. This intimation, which at firſt ſight appears to have been ſo extraordinary, was nevertheleſs dictated by admirable good ſenſe. He apprehended, not without reaſon, that being aſſailed by a Ruſſian guard, the aſſaſſins would inſtantly complete their work; and after cutting him to pieces with their ſabres, conſult their own ſafety in flight. By giving them notice of the riſk that they incurred, he in ſome degree gained their confidence. In effect, he remarked that his conduct ſeemed to ſoften them, as it implied that he did not meditate to make his eſcape out of their hands. The attitude in which he was held down on the ſaddle, becoming ſo painful as to be quite inſupportable, he entreated of them at leaſt to allow him to ſit more at his eaſe, to mount him on another horſe, and to give him a boot. They gratified him in his requeſts; and continuing their progreſs, as chance directed, acroſs almoſt impaſſable lands, they arrived

at

at the entrance of the wood of Bielany, only a league diſtant from Warſaw.

That metropolis preſented a ſcene of general confuſion, no one knowing what road the aſſaſſins had taken, and many conceiving that it was more dangerous to purſue, than to allow them to carry off their prey; ſince if overtaken, they would infallibly maſſacre the King in the firſt inſtance. Several of the Nobility mounted, neverthelefs, their horſes, and following the track of the conſpirators as well as they were able, got to the place where Staniſlaus had paſſed the lines. There they found his "Peliſſe," which in the precipitation of his flight had been left behind. It was pierced with holes made by the bullets or ſabres, and ſtained with blood in many parts. After ſuch teſtimonies, little doubt could be entertained that its owner was no more, and the King's death was univerſally conſidered as certain.

During this time he ſtill remained in the hands of Koſinſki, and his ſix aſſociates, who continued to advance with him

 into

into the wood of Bielany, when they were ſuddenly hailed by a Ruſſian patrole. They immediately held a ſort of council, at the end of which four diſappeared. The other three forced him to diſmount and walk; but ſcarcely had a quarter of an hour elapſed, before a ſecond Ruſſian guard challenged them. Terrified at the danger, the two inferior conſpirators fled, leaving Staniſlaus alone with Koſinſki; who holding his ſabre over the King, menaced him with death, if he attempted delay or reſiſtance. Overcome with fatigue, added to the pain of his bruiſes, he only implored his conductor to ſtop, and to ſuffer him to take a moment's repoſe. But Koſinſki refuſed, at the ſame time informing him that beyond the wood they ſhould find a carriage. Thus compelled, they proceeded together till they found themſelves at the gate of the convent of Bielany.

His Majeſty now began to conceive ſome hopes of extricating himſelf, which were increaſed by perceiving that his conductor,

ductor, who wandered without knowing where he was, seemed to be lost in thought, and agitated by reflections. Desirous to profit of these symptoms of irresolution, he said to Kosinski, "I see you are embarrassed "which way to proceed; let me therefore "enter the convent of Bielany, and do you "provide for your own safety."—"No," replied he, "I have sworn." They continued to walk on in silence, till they came to Mariemont, a small palace belonging to the Elector of Saxony, not more than two miles from Warsaw. Kosinski expressed some satisfaction at recognising the place, and the King still earnestly requesting a moment's rest, the other at length consented. They sat down on the ground together; Stanislaus endeavouring to improve the time, in order to soften his conductor, and induce him to favour, or permit his escape.

To this end he represented to Kosinski the atrocity of the crime which he committed, in having undertaken to murder his

his Sovereign, and the invalidity of any oath adminiſtered to him for the perpetration of ſo heinous an offence. In reply the other alleged, that far from being the protector of his people, Staniſlaus acted as their oppreſſor; and he particularly enumerated ſome recent acts of government, which in their operation were not leſs pernicious than they were cruel. The unfortunate King admitted the fact; but in his juſtification aſſured Koſinſki, that the meaſures alluded to were carried into execution by a ſtronger power than his; namely the authority of the Baron de Stackelberg, the Ruſſian embaſſador. "It was no longer ago than this very day," added he, "that I took him aſide at the "drawing-room, and remonſtrated with "him for ſome time, upon the ſeverity of "the orders in queſtion." "That may "be true," anſwered Koſinſki; "for I "was myſelf at Court this morning, con-"cealed among the crowd; and I re-"marked that you was for ſome minutes

"engaged

" engaged in earneſt converſation at the " window with the Ruſſian Miniſter."

This incident ſeemed to make ſuch an impreſſion on his mind, that he even let drop expreſſions of concern and remorſe; but ſuddenly recollecting himſelf, " If," ſaid he, " I ſhould conſent, and con- " duct you back to Warſaw, what will " be the conſequence? I ſhall be taken and " executed." The reflection plunged him into new irreſolution. " I give you my " word of honour," anſwered Staniſlaus, " that no harm ſhall happen to you; but " if you doubt my promiſe, eſcape while " there is ſtill time! I can find my way to " ſome place of ſecurity, and I will " certainly direct your purſuers to take " the contrary road to that which you have " choſen." Touched by ſo generous an aſſurance, Koſinſki, already ſhaken, could no longer contain his emotions; he threw himſelf at the King's feet, implored his Majeſty's forgiveneſs for the crime which he had been led to commit, and ſwore to

defend him againſt every enemy, relying totally on his generoſity for pardon and preſervation. The King reiterated his engagements of protection. Judging however, that it would be prudent to gain ſome aſylum without delay, and recollecting that there was a mill at a little diſtance, he immediately made towards it. They arrived at the door in a few minutes.

Koſinſki, by the King's deſire, knocked, but no anſwer was returned. He then broke a pane of glaſs in the window, and entreated that they would afford ſhelter to a nobleman who had been plundered by robbers. The maſter of the hut peremptorily refuſed, ſuppoſing them to be banditti, and for above half an hour continued to perſiſt in his denial of opening the door. Staniſlaus therefore at length approached, and ſpeaking through the broken pane, endeavoured to perſuade the miller to admit him under the roof; adding, " If we were robbers, as you apprehend,

"hend, it would be eaſy for us to uſe "violence, and to break the whole window, "inſtead of one pane." The argument prevailed; they opened the door, and admitted him. He immediately wrote on his tablets, which had accidentally eſcaped the rapacity of the aſſaſſins, a few lines to General Cocceii, Colonel of the firſt regiment of foot-guards. They were literally as follows: "Par une eſpece de miracle je "ſuis ſauvé des mains des aſſaſſins. Je "ſuis ici, au petit moulin de Mariemont. "Venez au plutôt, me tirer d'ici. Je ſuis "bleſſé, mais pas fort." It was not without the utmoſt difficulty that he could perſuade any one to carry the note to Warſaw; as the people of the mill ſtill believed him to be, what he profeſſed himſelf, a gentleman who had been attacked and wounded by robbers. Koſinſki offered to reſtore to his Majeſty every thing which he had taken from his perſon, but Staniſlaus left him all, except the blue riband of the "White Eagle."

On

On the arrival of the meſſenger at Warſaw, the general joy, heightened by aſtoniſhment, was incredible. General Cocceii, accompanied by a detachment of the guards, rode inſtantly to the mill, where he found Koſinſki ſtanding at the door with his ſabre drawn, who admitted him as ſoon as he recognized his perſon. A ſcene equally curious and affecting took place on his entrance into the hut. The firſt object which preſented itſelf, was the King ſtretched on the floor, covered with the miller's cloak, ſunk into a ſort of ſleep or of inſenſibility, cauſed by fatigue. Cocceii threw himſelf at his Majeſty's feet, calling him his Sovereign, and kiſſing his hand. It was then for the firſt time, that the miller and his family diſcovered the quality of their gueſt; and they ſoon followed the example of the General, by throwing themſelves on their knees. I have heard General Cocceii relate theſe circumſtances, and I have been at the mill itſelf, rendered celebrated by ſo extraordinary an event: it is

a wretched

a wretched Polifh hovel, remote from any houfe. Staniflaus has gratefully recompenfed its owner, by building him a mill upon the Viftula, and adding to it a fmall penfion.

About five o'clock in the morning, the King arrived in Cocceii's carriage at his palace in the capital. Scarcely would the people credit the evidence of their fenfes, when they faw him return, or believe that he was ftill alive. Nothing could in fact be more wonderful, and contrary to all probability. His wound, though deep, was not dangerous, and he foon recovered the perfonal bruifes and injuries which he had fuffered on that memorable night. But he long preferved, and ftill retains the impreffion made on his mind by fo defperate an attempt. Well aware how much the Confederates detefted, and confidered him as the author of the calamities of Poland, he had always entertained apprehenfions that their vengeance would aim at his life. Even now

now he cannot be confidered as exempt from fimilar, or greater misfortunes.

On the day fubfequent to his affaffination, Mr. Wroughton haftened to congratulate him on his efcape; and Staniflaus related to him the tranfaction in nearly the fame words which I have ufed. Then taking him by the hand, " I always believed," faid he, " my dear Wroughton, that the " Confederates would execute what you " have witneffed, and I have proved but " too right in my conjecture. Yet, merely " for my life I was not afraid, from the " moment that inftead of difpatching me, " as they might have done, I found that " the Confpirators carried me out of the " city. I imagined indeed, that their inten- " tion was to conduct me to the confe- " derate army, and to put me to death: " but I nourifhed fome faint hopes that if " I could convince them I had never " merited their hatred, I might fucceed in " winning them over to my fide. I even " fqueezed

" squeezed Kosinski's hand in mine, while " he plundered me of my effects; hopeful " to awaken in him sentiments of loyalty, " or of compassion." Stanislaus, who knew his countrymen well, relied not without reason, on the levity, flexibility, and inconsistency of character, which distinguish the Poles as a nation.

It is hardly to be credited, that of three chiefs to whom the enterprize was intrusted, two should quit him at the most critical moment, in order to carry the intelligence to their employers, instead of fulfilling the object of their attempt; and that the third should be won over by Stanislaus, to conduct him back to his capital. Nor is it more easy to conceive how men, when once worked up by enmity and fanaticism to undertake such a crime, should leave it incomplete, after all the difficulties attending it were surmounted. Damien, who failed in his attack on Louis the Fifteenth; and the Duke d'Aveiro, who equally miscarried in his conspiracy to destroy the late

King

... MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWA...

King of Portugal, were unable to accomplish their design. But the Polish assassins, after vanquishing every obstacle, and carrying off their prey with unexampled success, liberated him either by their precipitancy, or by their repentance. Had he once been brought to the camp of the confederate Generals, there can be no doubt that he would have suffered death; perhaps juridically, like Charles the First of England.

I return to the sequel of the conspiracy. Kosinski, to whom Stanislaus owed his preservation, was a man of mean extraction, born in the palatinate of Cracow, having assumed the name of Kosinski, which is that of a noble Polish family. By his services in the Confederate army, he had risen to the rank of an officer under the command of Pulawski. While the two other associated chiefs remained with him, he continued unshaken in his purpose; but from the moment of his being abandoned by them, he began to waver in his determination, and to entertain ideas of preserving the King.

The

The oath which he had taken, and the benediction given to the enterprize by the Nuncio, long operated neverthelefs, in fuftaining his refolution. Even after he had conducted the King in fafety to Warfaw, he expreffed more than once his doubts of the rectitude of his paft conduct, and a degree of concern for having deceived his employers. He was therefore detained under a very ftrict guard, and obliged to give evidence againft his two companions, Lukawfki and Strawenfki, who being both taken foon afterwards, were brought prifoners to Warfaw. The former was feized in a cottage, while in bed with his miftrefs. Both were folemnly tried, and adjudged to die; but at the King's interceffion with the Diet, they confented to mitigate the cruel part of the fentence. Inftead of inflicting on the two chiefs the variety of tortures which the laws of Poland enact againft regicides, they were fimply beheaded. Staniflaus equally interpofed his intereft to fave from capital punifhment,

ment, ſeveral of the inferior conſpirators. They were only condemned to work for life on the fortifications of Kaminieck in Podolia, where they are at this time.

During the whole period of his detention, Lukawſki behaved with firmneſs and compoſure, never manifeſting any ſymptoms of weakneſs or puſillanimity. He ſuffered at the ſame hour with Strawenſki; and Mr. Wroughton who ſaw them both die, has aſſured me, that nothing could exceed the dignity with which the former ſubmitted to his fate. When led out to the ſcaffold, though his body was much extenuated by the ſeverity of his confinement, diet, and treatment; his ſpirit, unſubdued, raiſed him above the ignominy of an infamous and public execution. He had not been permitted to ſhave his beard while in priſon, and his dreſs correſponded with his figure; but none of theſe humiliations could depreſs his mind. With indignation he refuſed to ſee or to embrace Koſinſki, whom he branded with the appellation

pellation of a Traitor. On arriving at the place of puniſhment, about a mile from Warſaw, he betrayed no unbecoming emotion; and his harangue to the multitude aſſembled to ſee him die, breathed the ſame ſpirit which animated his life. He expreſſed neither ſorrow nor contrition for his attempt againſt the King, which he conſidered as rather meritorious than criminal. His head was ſevered from his body. Strawenſki diſplayed equal indifference, and reſigned himſelf in ſilence to his ſentence. Within a few days after their execution, the King ſent away Koſinſki into Italy, as his life would probably have been unſafe in Poland, after betraying the cauſe in which he had engaged. He now reſides at Senigallia in the Papal territories, and enjoys from his Majeſty an annual allowance of three hundred ducats.

To the intended aſſaſſination of Staniſlaus, ſucceeded in the following year, the actual partition of his dominions: an event, the cauſes, completion, and conſequences of which, I have

have already endeavoured to delineate in a former letter. It was in vain that the unfortunate Prince attempted to protract the difmemberment of the country over which he reigned. His ftruggles only manifefted to all Europe the helplefs condition of the Polifh Sovereign and nation. Confcious of the perfonal difhonour that he muft incur, by figning an act which equally degraded both, he refufed to lend himfelf to fuch a proceeding. He even gave the Englifh Minifter at Warfaw, the ftrongeft and moft folemn affurances, that he would neither be induced by offers, nor compelled by violence, to fubfcribe fo humiliating a renunciation. "I prefent you "my hand," faid he to Mr. Wroughton, in the agony of his mind; "and I autho-"rife you to inform your Court in my "name, that I will rather fuffer it to be "cut off, than fubmit to do a deed which "muft for ever fully my name and reign."

The King's fubfequent conduct correfponded ill with his declarations: after reluctantly

luctantly ſigning the avowal of the claims ſet up by the three Powers, he added his conſent to the perpetual alienation of the ſequeſtered provinces from the Crown and Republic of Poland. We muſt not however, too ſeverely condemn him for his want of reſolution, which could only have been ruinous to himſelf, without producing the ſmalleſt benefit to his country. As his refuſal would neceſſarily have coſt him the Crown to which he had been raiſed, he had not the magnanimity to renounce it, and return into a private ſtation, rather than ſtoop to the mandate impoſed on him. We might indeed have admired him, if he had preferred the alternative of abdicating the throne; but, circumſtanced as he was, it could ſcarcely be expected. A ſceptre, even when robbed of its brighteſt ornaments, is ſtill too intoxicating a poſſeſſion to be voluntarily relinquiſhed by thoſe, who have been accuſtomed to the homage which it excites. Staniſlaus, it muſt likewiſe be remembered, was not be-

loved by the majority of his subjects, nor would he have found in their allegiance and affection any steady support. On the other hand, Catharine who had elevated him to the royal dignity, would infallibly have precipitated him from it, for a refusal to comply with her commands. He had in fact no choice except submission; and posterity will incline rather to pity, than to censure him, for the involuntary part which he acted in the dismemberment of his country.

From that period to the present, Poland can scarcely with propriety be said to have any history, or any political existence. Without commerce, without a foreign ally, and without internal force or revenues adequate to its emancipation; compressed on all sides by three powerful monarchies, it seems to wait in silent expectation the sentence of its total extinction. The King and the Diet are only empty names: Warsaw is governed by Russian councils, and subjected by Russian troops. Even

Even the provinces are torpid; and the Confederates, who ſo long endeavoured to avert the deſtruction of the Republic, have only by their imprudent efforts accelerated its fall. Such is the fate of a country, which under a wiſe government, might have been juſtly ranked among the moſt powerful European States; which in the laſt century carried at one time its victorious arms into the heart of Muſcovy, and ſaved Vienna at another, from falling into the hands of the Turks; but which now only holds out a memorable leſſon to the preſent, as well as to future ages.

The character of Staniſlaus is not one of thoſe hard to penetrate, or difficult to delineate. As a man and an individual, he is certainly more amiable, more an object of attachment and reſpect, than when contemplated in his kingly capacity. His perſon, from the concurring teſtimony of all who knew him in his youth, was handſome, graceful, and elegant. Such Count Poniatowſki doubtleſs appeared in the eyes of Catharine the

the Second, when he firſt arrived at Peterſburgh. But, the graces of that period of his life are fled; and within the laſt three or four years he is become too luſty, though it would be unjuſt to ſay even now that he is at all corpulent. He is of a middle ſtature, well proportioned, and of a manly figure. His face is open, pleaſing, and intereſting; the features bold and ſtrongly marked, particularly his noſe and chin. Staniſlaus's complexion is pale, and he wears his own hair, which is of a deep color, approaching to black. There is ſaid to be in his caſt of countenance, ſomething penſive and melancholy. At firſt ſight, I confeſs, this expreſſion did not ſtrike me; but the oftener I have had opportunities of ſeeing and ſtudying him, the more viſible it becomes: in profile it is particularly apparent. I believe however, that it is more the reſult of his actual ſituation, his paſt calamities, and his future proſpects, than natural and congenial to him. Whether in effect he caſts his view backwards, or directs

directs it onwards to the deftiny that awaits him, how vaft a train of awful and painful reflection muft neceffarily open on his mind! I have fometimes feen him ftand in a thoughtful attitude, mufing, filent, and as I could fancy, occupied in confidering his future fate. It is impoffible not to feel for him at fuch moments, a more than common intereft.

The King of Poland does not particularly excel in any of the exercifes of the body; and though he rides pretty well, he fcarcely ever hunts. He ftill dances the Poloneze dances, but he has left off every other kind, above two years. In mufic he has no tafte, nor does he poffefs even a moderate ear. A circumftance more fingular is, that he never plays at cards. Neither his Majefty, nor any of the Poniatowfki family, were ever able to learn the common games of cards, fo as to attain in them a tolerable degree of perfection. He is a lover and a patron of all the fine arts; but in paintings he has great judgment,

ment, and has collected ſome few valuable pieces of the firſt maſters. No Prince was ever more gracious, eaſy, and affable in his manners and addreſs, which is the reſult of natural diſpoſition, not the effect of artifice. His converſation is pleaſing, and frequently diſplays, without the ſmalleſt affectation, extenſive reading. Few individuals ſpeak ſo fluently or gracefully the principal European languages. Scarcely any Sovereign has travelled ſo much as Staniſlaus: thoſe who have known him in the different characters of a private gentleman and a king, are univerſally attached to him; and his elevation to a throne has not deprived him of the friends, whom he had acquired when Count Poniatowſki.

If, after conſidering him as a man, we view him as a monarch, he appears to ſink in our eſtimation: he is amiable, not great; engaging, but not impoſing. Deficient in the ſtrong powers of diſcernment, as well as in the vigour of mind which his ſituation demanded, he is not calculated

to

to direct the ſtorm by which he has been aſſailed. He may be ſaid rather to poſſeſs a lively and pleaſing, than a ſolid and penetrating underſtanding. The facility of his nature expoſes him to deception; and the flexibility of his temper is abuſed by favorites, who acquire and retain an aſcendency over him. Adulation under every form, finds too eaſy an acceſs; peculiarly when, aided by female attractions, it aſſumes the maſk of affection. The perſons who ſurround him, availing themſelves of this foible, frequently obtain by importunity the recompences due only to merit. One of his Poliſh Majeſty's weakneſſes, which is flattered with the greateſt ſucceſs, is his ſuppoſed reſemblance in the leading features of his mind and body, to Henry the Fourth of France. The perſonal ſimilarity is much more imaginary than real; but as his forehead, noſe, and chin, are bold and prominent, like thoſe of the King of Navarre, there is ſufficient on which for courtiers to found a likeneſs. His gallantries, his affability, his clemency,

clemency, his aſcending from a private ſtation to a throne; and laſtly, his having, like Henry, eſcaped from aſſaſſination: all theſe circumſtances are enumerated and inſiſted on, as ſtriking proofs of a reſemblance between the French and the Poliſh Sovereign. Unfortunately the parallel fails in more eſſential articles of character; in wiſdom, firmneſs, heroic valor, diſcernment, and above all in frugality.

It is believed that Staniſlaus is by no means deficient in perſonal courage, though he has never ſeen ſervice, nor can be ſuppoſed to poſſeſs the qualifications of a man educated in military habits. He very frequently wears a uniform, and reviews from time to time, like other Princes, his guards and troops. But his talents are more calculated for the calm, than the tempeſt; for the labour of the cabinet, than the exertions of the field. He paſſes much of his time, ſhut up in his apartments, occupied in writing, and engaged in buſineſs of various kinds. To theſe employments he ſeems adapted;

adapted; for he dictates, or composes, not only with ease, but with elegance; and his eloquence, when he harangues, is at once touching, copious, and persuasive. So conscious is Stanislaus of his being unequal to, and unfit for his situation, that he has said to Mr. Wroughton more than once, "Mon "ami, je sens que je ne suis pas à ma "place: j'aurois du être Chancelièr, et "non pas Roi."

The greatest defect of his character public and private, is the want of economy. His liberality of disposition degenerates into prodigality, and involves him in continual pecuniary difficulties. Though his revenues are ample, he is nevertheless poor, As some compensation for the loss of power, and the diminution of prerogative; the Russians, after the late dismemberment of Poland, increased his private salary from the State. His Majesty's clear annual receipt at this time does not fall short of two hundred and thirty thousand pounds sterling. All the great officers of the crown are

moreover

moreover paid, not by him, but by the Republic. Yet, with ſo princely an income, he has no treaſure, no fund for future exigencies; and ſcarcely can he find wherewithal to maintain his dignity, or to ſupport his houſehold. As there is neither order nor ſyſtem in his expences, he is devoured by his family, and impoveriſhed by his miſtreſſes and attendants. Count Rzewuſki, "Marechal de la Cour," who has the direction of the privy purſe, allows the King about eighteen hundred pounds ſterling a month, for his ordinary expenditure. This ſum, which ought to be adequate to all his wants, is nevertheleſs inſufficient, becauſe it is not managed with prudence, nor ſuperintended by a judicious frugality.

Staniſlaus at every period of his life, has been remarkable for his gallantry. The graces of his perſon, which opened him a way to the throne of Poland, rendered him early acceptable to the other ſex. They continue to retain too great an aſcendant over

over him, and they have completed the deſtruction of his finances. He ſtill nouriſhes the wiſh to be beloved, and women are not wanting to avail themſelves of his weakneſs. Under profeſſions of diſintereſted paſſion, they obtain from him more than they could gain by the ſale of their beauty. Yet his Poliſh Majeſty is approaching faſt to the age when men ceaſe to be objects of real attachment, and are uſually the dupes of intereſted love. Perhaps the King does not ſufficiently attend to this law of nature, from which he is not more exempt than others.

On the ſubject of his amours, which have been numerous and almoſt indiſcriminate, I ſhall ſay little: for many reaſons they are better conſigned to oblivion. But Staniſlaus, though naturally inconſtant and changeable, is yet capable of a laſting paſſion. After his election to the crown, he became attached to the Princeſs C——a, one of the moſt beautiful and accompliſhed ladies of Poland. Their attachment was ſo

far

far from being private or myſterious, that on the contrary all Warſaw witneſſed it. During a conſiderable time ſhe reigned in his heart without a rival; till confiding implicitly in her fondneſs, he ventured at length to treat her with neglect. Indignant at ſuch uſage, in a moment of reſentment, when he leaſt expected it, ſhe broke with him, and attached herſelf to Prince Repnin, the Ruſſian embaſſador. It was in vain that Staniſlaus attempted to mollify, or to awaken her former paſſion: ſhe ſhut her door againſt him, refuſed to admit him to her preſence, and would never liſten to any overtures of reconciliation. He was inconſolable for a long time, and even abandoned himſelf when in private, to the moſt immoderate tranſports of grief or of dejection.

The King has no natural children avowed as ſuch, nor has he had any, male or female, ſince his elevation to the throne; but when Count Poniatowſki, he had two by a woman of very inferior condition. They are both abſolutely diſowned, and educated in obſcurity.

rity. He continues to lead however a life which may be termed libertine and diſſolute, more eſpecially at forty-ſix years of age, when youth can be no longer pleaded in excuſe. Two females divide his time, and occupy his heart at this moment: the firſt, Madam T——s, an Italian, though now in her wane, is ſtill extremely beautiful. The other, the Counteſs G——a, is more elegant, feminine, and pleaſing. In return for the favours which they beſtow on him, they drain his purſe; and contribute neither to render him more reſpectable, nor probably in fact more happy.

His Poliſh Majeſty has two brothers, and as many ſiſters alive. Prince Caſimir Poniatowſki, the eldeſt, who is near eleven years older than the King, unfortunately reſembles him in the parts of his character which are by no means models for imitation. His diſſipations and his profuſions have reduced him to the neceſſity of alienating the high poſt of "Great Chamberlain of the "Crown," and have rendered him depend-

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ant on the King for his principal ſupport. Prince Poniatowſki has one ſon, named Staniſlaus, who is at this time near five-and-twenty; and who at leaſt cannot be accuſed of following the example either of his father or his uncle: extravagance is by no means his fault, or his characteriſtic. Should the crown of Poland be continued in the family of Poniatowſki, it is on him that the Empreſs of Ruſſia will probably cauſe it to devolve whenever it may become vacant. He certainly entertains hopes of aſcending the throne; and with a view of facilitating ſo great an object of ambition, he has been not long ſince, in the Court of Peterſburgh. All circumſtances conſidered, it is however very improbable that theſe viſions of royalty will ever be realized, or that the ſceptre will be perpetuated in the collateral deſcendants of the reigning Sovereign.

A dark cloud overſpreads the evening of Staniſlaus's life and reign: he feels its preſſure, and ſometimes gives vent to the

agitations

agitations of his mind on the tender ſubject of his future proſpects. Many times has he predicted to Mr. Wroughton, that his end will be diſaſtrous and violent. Not long ago, graſping the Engliſh Envoy's hand, "Ah, mon ami," ſaid he, "je ſuis "reſervé pour des nouveaux et des grands "malheurs. Je mourrai comme Charles "Premiér d'Angleterre." Such predictions, it is evident, are merely the apprehenſions of a man who ſees the precarious tenure by which he holds his crown; who is ſurrounded by enemies domeſtic as well as foreign; and who anticipates as certain, dangers which are only contingent. Yet we muſt confeſs, that there is too much reaſon to tremble for the fate of Staniſlaus. The tempeſts which at preſent ſeem overblown, will probably wake again, and may finally overturn the Sovereign and the Republic of Poland. But theſe ſpeculations would lead me too far, and I ſhall therefore cloſe my letter.

LETTER XXI.

Decline of the Court of Warſaw ſince the acceſſion of the preſent King.—Deſcription of Staniſlaus's villa.—General Coccеii.—Proſtitution of honors and dignities in Poland.—Venality of the upper ranks.—Libertiniſm.—Number, facility, and inſtances of divorces.—Virtues of the Poles.—Female character.—Elegance of dreſs.—Portrait of a Poliſh woman of quality.—Heroiſm of the women.—Military forces.—Environs of Warſaw.—Villanow.—Examination of John Sobieſki's reign and character.—Enquiries relative to the "Plica Polonica."—Poliſh Peaſants.—Reflections on the actual condition and future fate of Poland.

WARSAW, *July* 26, 1778.

THE Court, as may naturally be ſuppoſed, has declined in ſplendor during the courſe of the preſent reign, proportionably with the diminution ſuſtained by Poland in national wealth, greatneſs, and power. Such

Such a change, even before the partition of 1772, was certain and inevitable. While the Saxon Princes held the ſceptre, a vaſt portion of the revenues of their hereditary dominions flowed into the country of which they were the elective Sovereigns. Compelled to divide their time between the Poliſh and the Saxon capitals, all the arts as well as the refinements of Dreſden accompanied them to Warſaw. Mr. Wroughton, who remembers the laſt years of the time to which I allude; aſſures me that the number and beauty of the equipages, horſes, and train of the great nobility, who uſually came to welcome the arrival of Auguſtus the Third, exceeded belief. Prince Radzivil in particular, whoſe patrimonial eſtates were then of a magnitude and extent approaching to royal, ſometimes united with the elegance of European taſte, the barbarous pomp of Sarmatian manners. He once entered Warſaw in his coach, drawn by ſix white bears caught in his own Lithuanian foreſts, harneſſed, and broken in for the

 purpoſe;

purpose; but their ferocity and intractability rendered them dangerous to their keepers. I should not venture to relate the fact, if I did not hold it from so high an authority. However extraordinary it may appear, the manners of Poland render it credible.

Stanislaus's drawing-room, or to speak more properly, his levee, though numerously attended, displays no magnificence. He only acts the Sovereign, and performs the part of King in the circle, while Count Stackelberg possesses the effective power. A number of the first nobility still appear in the Polish habit, which gives the crowd a picturesque appearance. In summer the King retires to a little villa or seat, not quite a mile from Warsaw, where he resides in great privacy, rather as a private gentleman than a crowned head. This retreat, for it is no more, is called "Les Bains," there being in the centre of the building a circular bath covered with a dome. The house, which lies in a bason or hollow, sur-

furrounded by hills and woods, is very agreeable in warm weather; but the fituation renders it unwholefome as foon as the autumnal rains and damps commence. I have had the honor of dining there with his Majefty in a very fmall company, of which Mr. Wroughton was one. The youngeft of his two fifters, the Countefs Branicza; his nephew, Prince Jofeph Poniatowfki, a youth of fifteen, who is brought up under the King's immediate care; and the Bifhop of Plockzo, Staniflaus's youngeft furviving brother, were prefent. His Polifh Majefty appears to great advantage on fuch occafions, from which ceremony is banifhed; and for which he feems more defigned, than for public life and fituations of difficulty. He allowed me to furvey every part of his little manfion. Horace's Sabine farm could fcarcely be fmaller; but it is voluptuoufly furnifhed, and contains fome paintings of value. His cabinet is fitted up with decorations and pictures in the Chinefe tafte. On the table lay fpread

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a melancholy ſubject of contemplation. It was a fine map of Poland, recently done, and in which the *diſmembered provinces* are accurately marked, with their *new* appellations. Frederic has denominated his ſhare "La Pruſſe Occidentale;" and Maria Thereſa has revived the titles of "Gallicia and Lodomiria," which ſupercede the antient geographical names of thoſe parts of Poland. Such a mute, but eloquent companion conſtantly before his eyes, cannot tend to enliven the hours of Staniſlaus's retirement, or to inſpire him with gay ideas.

It is at General Cocceii's that I have ſeen him more unbent, more convivial, and more apparently cheerful than any where elſe. That veteran officer, equally a man of letters, a ſoldier, and a polite gentleman, commands a regiment of guards. He is now advancing faſt towards old age; but he is vigorous, communicative, hoſpitable, and of an excellent ſociety. After having once been the friend of the great Frederic, he is now, in the evening of life, become the

the companion of Staniſlaus; who, if inferior in talents, is in other points of view far more amiable than the ſtern philoſopher of "Sans Souci." Cocceii reſides in a ſort of ſuburban villa juſt out of Warſaw, where he has frequently the honor of entertaining his Poliſh Majeſty. There, in a ſelect company of both ſexes, after ſupper, and undiſturbed by corroding reflections, which, as Cervantes well obſerves, ſeldom hold much interference at ſuch times; the King ſeems to forget at once his paſt misfortunes, and his future proſpects. His converſation, manners, and whole deportment, convince me how pleaſing he muſt have been when Count Poniatowſki. I am not ſurpriſed that Catharine, after admitting him to ſo diſtinguiſhed a place in her affections, elevated him to the throne of Poland: but I fear Staniſlaus will have cauſe to lament, that love and fortune ſhould have conſpired to raiſe him from a private ſtation to royalty. Juvenal's obſervation, when ſpeaking of kings in the tenth ſatire, continually

 recurs

recurs to my mind, as I reflect on the singular destiny of this amiable Prince.

The general dissolution of morals among the upper orders, is not one of the least extraordinary and characteristic features of the capital and country from which I am writing. Neither Petersburgh nor Naples can surpass Warsaw in these respects. All the principles which bind society together, and which purify or perpetuate it, appear to me to be relaxed among the Poles. The army, the court, the church, and every department of private life, are infected. Those institutions, civil and political, which in their very nature should be most free from the contagion, are tainted. Boys who have never seen a camp, nor attained the slightest degree of professional experience, receive commissions as colonels and generals. The habit of a soldier, which ought to be confined to such as are in military service, is prostituted; and almost every nobleman wears at pleasure a uniform. The blue riband of the "White Eagle," as well

as the red riband of "St. Staniſlaus," which latter was inſtituted by his preſent Majeſty, are ſo common, that ſcarcely a private gentleman is without one or both. Murders and aſſaſſinations, in the metropolis as well as in the provinces, are committed with impunity; nor is it ſafe, even at this ſeaſon of the year, to walk the ſtreets of Warſaw by night, unaccompanied and unarmed. Not only the want of lamps is favourable to every kind of crime; but the Ruſſians protect for money the moſt atrocious delinquents.

The priſons throughout the kingdom are crowded with wretched individuals of both ſexes, immured, not for tranſgreſſions againſt the law or the ſtate; but the victims of arbitrary power, of violence, and of every kind of oppreſſion. It is here that Mr. Howard will find ample ſcope and field for his benevolent enquiries, and active exertions. In no country of Europe is the rage of gaming carried to a more pernicious pitch, or does it produce more deſtructive

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confequences. Neither the paft devaftations of war, which have impoverifhed the nobility, nor the lamentable condition of the Republic itfelf verging to its total fall, impofe a check on the fpirit of play. It pervades every company, and feems to acquire force, as the means of fupporting it are diminifhed. The Ruffian ambaffador's Hotel refembles at noon day, as I have feen, rather a club of gamefters, than the refidence of a great public Minifter, charged with the government of Poland. Similar fcenes are exhibited in the houfes of the firft nobility, who, after having fold their country, often lofe in an evening the fruit of their venality or their difhonor.

If fuch be the picture of the upper claffes, it cannot be fuppofed that the fofter fex is exempt from the vices which diftinguifh the men. It is not in fact gallantry, but licentioufnefs, which here reigns without control. The very idea of concealment is derided as unneceffary; and I will venture to affert, that women of

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the firſt diſtinction derive more pride and reſpect from the rank or qualities of their lovers, than from thoſe of their huſbands. Staniſlaus's example tends not a little to encourage the depravity of his Court; and during his reign it has attained to a point, unexampled ſince the time of Auguſtus the Second; an æra remarkable for the corruption of manners. The want of a Queen, whoſe preſence muſt neceſſarily have impoſed ſome reſtraint on the courtiers and ladies about her perſon, has completed the diſſolution of female morals. One of the natural conſequences, is the facility with which divorces are here obtained; and of courſe, their frequency. I am almoſt afraid to relate what I ſee and know on this point; ſo incredible may it appear. If infidelity to the nuptial bed was alleged and proved, it might be admitted as a legitimate cauſe for ſuch ſeparations; but hardly any reaſons are aſſigned or required, except mutual incompatibility, diſlike, or wearineſs in the parties. Women of irreproachable

able manners and conduct, young, beautiful, and highly born, are divorced at the end of three or four years, of a year, nay, of a few months. Should it be requifite to adduce inftances in fupport of my affertion, almoft every week offers them here in abundance.

Prince Martin Lubomirfki is at prefent foliciting a divorce from his *fecond* wife. His *firft*, the Countefs Haddick, an Auftrian by birth, daughter of Marfhal Haddick, is now fcarcely twenty-eight years of age, uncommonly pleafing in her perfon, and accomplifhed in her manners. He had no fpecific caufe of diflike to her, nor any crime to lay to her charge: but he had become enamoured of his *prefent* wife. He is now in turn weary of *her*, and wifhes to marry a *third*. There is little or no doubt of his procuring a fecond divorce, with the fame facility that he obtained the firft. I went with Mr. Wroughton a few days ago, to vifit the Princefs Zangufka, at a pleafant retreat on the banks of the Viftula, about half

half a mile out of town. She is a very elegant woman, not yet twenty-four. We found her in her garden, walking arm in arm with the Grand Chancellor of Poland, her husband the Prince Zangufki, and another lady, under the fhade of fome lofty trees. They were amicably foliciting a divorce from the head of the law; who here can grant them with nearly the fame eafe, that the Pope difpenfes pardons or indulgences. I underftand, the Prince is foon to be married to the very lady with whom he was then walking, in company with his own wife; and the two ladies live together at this moment in the greateft intimacy. Even the young Countefs Po——a, niece to the King, and of unexceptionable conduct, was divorced not long fince, after only *four months* marriage. I could enumerate many other examples of the fame kind. In any other country, practices fo repugnant to every principle of morals, would foon be prevented. But in Poland, the reftraints of law, as well as the ties of

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honor and decorum, are exceedingly weakened in their operation.

After having drawn ſo unpleaſing a picture of the vices of the higher orders, it is however, only juſtice to mention their good qualities; ſince if they do not outweigh, they form at leaſt ſome counterpoiſe in the oppoſite ſcale. The Poliſh men of condition poſſeſs a captivating exterior, and no where are to be found more accompliſhed cavaliers. In all the exerciſes of the body they are expert; but it is on horſeback that they peculiarly excel. "Le Polonais eſt "né à cheval;" and they preſerve this original characteriſtic of their Sarmatian or Scythian origin. I never ſaw men ride ſo gracefully, or unite a more martial air with the elegance and ſoftneſs of modern manners. In converſation they are full of urbanity, gay, communicative, and well bred. Almoſt all the young nobility have travelled, particularly into France; from whence they have brought back the ſuperficial, but modiſh addreſs, only to be

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gained at Paris. French is not any where ſpoken more generally or fluently than at Warſaw: for the Poles, like the Ruſſians, have a national facility at acquiring foreign languages. They are magnificent and ſhewy in their entertainments, with which they contrive to mix all the delicacy of an expenſive taſte and a creative fancy. It is to be lamented that a race of men, endowed with ſuch qualities and faculties, ſhould in general be falſe, inconſiſtent, fickle, prodigal, and deficient in that judgment, conduct, and conſiſtency of character, without which all external and ornamental talents are comparatively of no value or importance.

If the *men* excel in perſonal endowments and accompliſhments, the Poliſh *women* of rank or condition are equally pleaſing. The world does not produce females more winning, poliſhed, or calculated to charm in converſation. They have neither the ſhyneſs and coldneſs of the Engliſh, nor the reſerve and haughtineſs of the Auſtrian women.

women. Eaſe, joined with grace, and animated by the wiſh to pleaſe, render them infinitely agreeable. In beauty they may diſpute the palm with any country; and their attractions are commonly heightened by all the refinements of coquetry. I do not mean to apologize for their levity, or to excuſe their libertiniſm; but thoſe imperfections and faults are more the reſult of ſituation, than of natural depravity or licentiouſneſs. In a court and capital ſuch as Warſaw, it is not eaſy to reſiſt the ſeduction of example, added to the torrent of immorality. The ſame woman who in Poland is a Meſſalina, if tranſported to Vienna or to London, would have given an example of every conjugal virtue. It is ſociety, morals, and laws, which model individuals, and call into action every thing valuable in our nature. Here, all that I ſee, announces not leſs the internal diſſolution, than the external deſtruction of Poland.

The elegance and variety of the toilet are no where better underſtood, or more ſucceſsfully

ſucceſsfully practiſed than in this capital; where the ladies ſeem to diſdain the formal reſtraints impoſed by cuſtom in other courts. I have ſeen the ſame woman in the dreſſes of different nations and different centuries; a circumſtance that excites no aſtoniſhment here. There is ſomething Aſiatic in the ſtyle of female attire, which reminds me of Greek or Turkiſh, more than of French or German modes. In a country which frontiers on Moldavia and the Ukraine, ſuch a departure, or rather emancipation, from the "coſtume" of Paris, does not and ought not to ſurpriſe. I dined the day before yeſterday with the Princeſs Z——a, at her villa near the Viſtula, accompanied by Mr. Wroughton. The weather being inſupportably warm, we paſſed the whole afternoon in her garden, under the ſpreading ſhade of ſome large elms, not far from the bank of the river. I had then an opportunity of attentively conſidering her dreſs, which I will endeavour to deſcribe. Whatever inability the attempt may diſcover, it will

will convey to you an idea of the toilet of a Poliſh woman of quality, who adds to the advantages of birth and fortune, the additional attractions of youth and beauty.

Her head-dreſs had no reſemblance to any thing that I have ever beheld in other parts of Europe; for ſhe neither wore powder, nor was her hair frizzed, but on the contrary, ſimply combed down over her forehead, and bound by a muſlin fillet. Two treſſes twiſted, which fell from the left ſide, were negligently pinned to a ſort of turban, compoſed likewiſe of muſlin, that encircled her head. Her robe was of a pale roſe color, bordered by a rich embroidery, and deſcending to her feet, but without concealing them. About her waiſt was faſtened a girdle or ceſtus of ſilk near nine inches in breadth. It is exactly the zone of the Greeks and of Homer, which is ſtill worn in Walachia. A broad Medicis of Dreſden lace ſurrounded her boſom and ſhoulders, which were partly uncovered, partly veiled by her ſhift and a Turkiſh

gauze, calculated rather to diſplay than to hide thoſe parts of her perſon. Over her whole figure was diffuſed a voluptuous air, which added to the effect of her natural attractions. She ſhewed us her maids, who had juſt returned from bathing; young Poloneze girls, reſembling nymphs, in looſe drapery, with their wet hair floating down their backs. The princeſs herſelf, like Lady Wortley Montague's Fatima, is a native of Kaminiecz on the borders of Moldavia; and when a child, had, as ſhe told me, frequently been carried by her mother into the Haram of the Baſhaw of Choczim, capital of that Turkiſh province. I have found her converſation on every ſubject, not leſs intereſting than her figure; and I regret that my approaching departure from Warſaw will ſo ſoon interrupt our acquaintance.

It is not merely in the intercourſe of private life, in the graces of perſonal deportment, or in the ornaments of female cultivation, that the Poliſh women excel.

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They have in a variety of inſtances, diſplayed maſculine firmneſs and courage above their ſex; peculiarly during the period when their country was the ſcene of civil and of foreign war. I could cite ſome examples of this aſſertion not unworthy to be compared with the greateſt models of antiquity in heroiſm. At the action of Slonim in Lithuania, fought by Prince Radzivil againſt the forces of Catharine the Second, in the autumn of 1764, two ladies of the higheſt rank appeared in the field. The one was ſiſter to Prince Radzivil, the other was his wife. The latter, ſcarcely ſeventeen years of age, and newly married, fought in perſon on horſeback. With a piſtol in her hand ſhe rode along the line, encouraging the troops to do their duty; and when the Ruſſians obtained the victory, ſhe ſaved herſelf by ſwimming her horſe acroſs the river Niemen. This Camilla only wanted a Virgil to celebrate her courage. She was born a Counteſs Rzewuſki, and is ſtill alive, confined in

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a lonely caſtle in Lithuania, where, as I am told, ſhe is diſordered in her underſtanding. Her ſiſter-in-law is likewiſe living, and in Poland. The fact itſelf, which I know to be true, is one of the many that tend to prove how widely different are the ſpirit and manners of this country, from thoſe of our own.

It was not in valour, in patriotiſm, or in military enthuſiaſm, that the Poliſh confederates were deficient; but they wanted ſyſtem, ſubordination, obedience, and diſcipline. They will be, I fear, for ever deſtitute of thoſe eſſential qualities, which the Ruſſians know how to value, and to which they owe their actual ſuperiority. The Republic has at this time an army on foot, in regular pay, of about ſixteen thouſand ſoldiers; while half that number of Catharine's troops retain Poland in complete ſubjection. The Muſcovite forces, quartered in and near the metropolis, do not exceed nine hundred. It is not a little wonderful to behold a

country thus subdued by foreign violence, dismembered, and apparently near its dissolution; while at the same time, the capital seems immersed in pleasures, or sunk in apathy and indifference. Such a nation cannot hope to revive, and scarcely excites our compassion at its fall.

During my stay here, at this beautiful season, I have visited the environs of Warsaw on every side, with Mr. Wroughton for my conductor. They are in general flat, and devoid of picturesque or pleasing objects. No mountains, and scarcely any eminences are seen. Through the midst of the landscape rolls the Vistula; but far inferior in grandeur as well as in beauty to the Rhine, the Danube, or the Elbe. In some places it is divided by small islands; in others, it flows in a collected stream. The soil, though not unfertile, is very sandy. Hardly any marks of the vicinity of a metropolis present themselves; and at a mile from the city, a stranger would imagine himself in a desert. There are never-

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theleſs many very elegant palaces or villas in its neighbourhood. Among the chief, muſt be accounted the rival ones of Monkotow and Powonſki, which belong to the two Princeſſes of Lubomirſka and Czartoriſka, who long contended for ſuperiority in the heart of Staniſlaus. I was however more pleaſed to viſit Villanow, the favourite reſidence of the great John Sobieſki, in which he breathed his laſt. It is built in a plain, about two leagues from Warſaw, near a branch of the Viſtula. The architecture is elegant and grand, having been conſtructed by an Italian under Sobieſki's reign; and as it now belongs to Prince Czartoriſki, it is ſtill in perfect preſervation. I was particularly delighted with the gardens, which though laid out in the antique taſte, are very princely, full of large and venerable trees that ſhed a gloom over the walks.

A circumſtance which has not a little ſurpriſed me is, that I do not find among the Poles the enthuſiaſtic attachment or ve-

neration for the memory and character of John Sobieſki, which I had expected. Perhaps on a fair examination, his countrymen may form a much juſter eſtimate of his merit as a King, and particularly as a King of Poland, than can be done by ſtrangers. They aſſert that his government was ſtained with notorious defects, or rather vices; among which his avarice and rapacity were ſuch, that he was compared by them in theſe particulars to Veſpaſian. His uxoriouſneſs became towards the cloſe of his reign, the ſubject of many ſatirical writings and ludicrous Caricatures. Nor did the qualities of his Queen, whoſe violence and intemperance of conduct were ruinous to her eldeſt ſon, juſtify ſuch a partiality in the King her huſband. They moreover accuſe him of having always ſacrificed the true and palpable intereſts of his ſubjects to thoſe of his family, whoſe elevation to the throne he preferred above every other conſideration; and which he endeavoured to effect by methods repugnant

to, or ſubverſive of the conſtitution of the Poliſh Republic.

Even the moſt brilliant action of his reign, which has peculiarly endeared him to poſterity; I mean the ſuccour that he gave in perſon to the Emperor Leopold, when Vienna was beſieged by Cara Muſtapha in 1683, is arraigned with ſeverity by the Poles. They admit indeed, that it was beneficial to the houſe of Auſtria; but they maintain that it was impolitic in itſelf, and injurious to Poland. "The Turks," ſay they, "were obviouſly at that time, "as they ſtill continue, declining in poli-"tical power: had they even rendered "themſelves maſters of Vienna, they muſt "ſoon have evacuated it, and could never "have maintained a permanent footing in "Germany. Sobieſki injudiciouſly pre-"cipitated the fall of the Ottoman Empire, "by expelling the Turks from Hungary; "while at the ſame time he laid the founda-"tions of the Auſtrian greatneſs, by going to "the Emperor's relief. The Auſtrian Princes

"were

" were much more formidable enemies; and " we have feen the grand-daughter of Leo- " pold, by an act of fignal ingratitude, as well " as folly, fcarcely ninety years afterwards, " join with Pruffia and Ruffia to difmember " Poland. It is to John Sobiefki therefore " that we trace, and in fome meafure impute " our actual ftate of ruin and degradation. " He acted no lefs contrary to the interefts " of his own family, when towards the end " of his life he entered into the clofeft con- " nexions with Leopold, by marrying his " eldeft fon Prince James to the Emprefs's " fifter. The indignation and apprehen- " fions of his fubjects, alarmed at fuch an " alliance with a foreign fovereign, in- " duced them to refufe to perpetuate the " Crown in Sobiefki's line. In our efti- " mate he neither merits the love of his " country, nor the admiration of foreign " nations."

It cannot be denied that there is fome validity, as well as truth, in thefe accufations, of which I was not fully aware, till

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I converſed with the Poles themſelves. We muſt nevertheleſs oppoſe to them the glorious victory of Choczim, gained by Sobieſki over the Turks, which extricated his country from a deplorable ſtate of humiliation, and freed them from an ignominious tribute to the Porte. His march to the relief of Vienna is not to be tried by the principles of ordinary policy, and ſtill leſs by its effects at the diſtance of near a century. In ſnatching the capital and dominions of Leopold from the hands of Mahometan barbarians, he appeared the champion of civilization, of chriſtianity, and of Europe. As ſuch we venerate and admire him, without conſidering whether he ſufficiently attended to the remote intereſts of his Poliſh ſubjects. Nor ought we to forget his valor, clemency, and the many great qualities that met in his character. At no period of time, ſince the extinction of the houſe of Jagellon, has Poland enjoyed ſo high a national conſideration as under his reign. In how diſtinguiſhed a light he appeared

peared to foreign princes his cotemporaries, we may judge by the behaviour of Charles the Twelfth; whoſe admiration for him was ſuch, that he would have raiſed to the throne one of Sobieſki's ſons in preference to every other candidate, if he had not been prevented by inſuperable obſtacles. Touched with enthuſiaſm, he wept as he ſtood over Sobieſki's tomb at Cracow, and exclaimed, "So great a King ought never "to have died!" Theſe facts and reflections, if they cannot obliterate his defects, muſt always incline us to regard him as one of the moſt illuſtrious Princes of the laſt, or of the preſent age.

During my ſtay here I have made many enquiries relative to the "Plica Polonica," a diſtemper not only extraordinary in itſelf, but aſſerted to be peculiar to this country; and almoſt, if not abſolutely irremediable. It is, I believe, unneceſſary to add that the ſeat of the diſorder is in the hair, which entangles, and by degrees forms into a ſolid maſs reſembling a mat: every ſeparate

hair

hair becomes a blood-veſſel, or tube of putrid matter. I have ſeen them ſtand out from the head, or hang in ropes from it; and nothing can be more loathſome, as well as diſguſting. All attempts to ſhave the part, or to cut the hair, in however early a ſtage of the diſeaſe ſuch operations are tried, produce either blindneſs, or maladies ſtill more fatal; at leaſt I am ſo aſſured by every body with whom I have converſed on the ſubject.

Upon the phyſical cauſes of the "Plica," I find very different opinions. Many perſons aſſert that it ariſes from ſome morbid, though hitherto unaſcertained qualities of the air, or water in Poland. It is certain that the latter element is, generally ſpeaking, bad, ſtagnant, and corrupt. But ſo it is likewiſe in many other countries of Europe and Aſia, where the "Plica" is unknown. On the whole, a more general, as well as rational belief is, that its riſe and progreſs is owing only to the horrid nutriment,

ment, and inconceivable filth of the Polifh people. In thefe particulars they are far worfe than the Swedes, Ruffians, or Hungarians. The diftemper is almoft exclufively found among the loweft clafs; labourers, peafants, and mendicants. It is befides, much more common in the remote provinces, than in the metropolis, or its vicinity. At Cracow, during the few days of my ftay there, I faw many more perfons affected with it in a greater or fmaller degree, than I have remarked in the courfe of near eight weeks refidence at Warfaw. Dirt, mifery, and neglect, feem to be the only caufes of this tremendous fcourge; which in a well adminiftered country, where the cleanlinefs, comfort, and felicity of the inferior orders were objects of legiflative attention, might probably foon be extirpated, or eafily cured.

The condition of the Polifh peafants is unqueftionably a very bad one; yet, many intelligent, humane, and impartial perfons

with whom I have converſed here, aſſure me, that it is not in fact ſo deplorable as we are led to conceive. They conſtitute indeed a part of the eſtate, as in Ruſſia, and are ſold or transferred with the land. But this humiliating ſervitude is accompanied with ſome circumſtances which counterbalance, or at leaſt mitigate their lot. Every peaſant, even the meaneſt, is provided by his lord with two oxen, two horſes, and a cottage. In caſe of fire, the latter is rebuilt; as in caſe of death, the former are replaced by their owner. A certain fixed portion of their time and labour is appropriated to their Lords, and the remainder they are at liberty to convert to their own profit or purpoſes. The number of days deſtined for their maſters, varies in different provinces, and on different eſtates. But in none is it ſo ſevere or exorbitant, as not to leave them time ſufficient to cultivate their own little land. In ſome parts of Poland, the peaſants are often rich,

rich, or at leaſt perfectly eaſy in their circumſtances. Their poverty and wretchedneſs are not therefore, ſay theſe perſons, the inevitable and neceſſary reſult of their condition. It ariſes more from their national and characteriſtic indolence, drunkenneſs, and want of induſtry or exertion. Such are the arguments and facts which I have heard. Admitting however all their force, they only prove how inſufficient is every private or partial emancipation, in order to rouſe and animate man, unleſs accompanied with the ſolid bleſſing of civil and political liberty. While the Poliſh people are altogether ſtrangers to that diſtinction, they can never riſe to their proper rank in ſociety, nor be juſtly accounted other than ſlaves.

I am now about to ſet out for Konigſberg; and if I were only to conſider Warſaw as a capital, independent of any moral or political circumſtances connected with it, I ſhould pronounce it an agreeable place of

of refidence. Its diffimilitude to other great cities ordinarily vifited, and its remote pofition on the eaftern frontier of Europe, render it peculiarly an object of curiofity. In all the amufements of a metropolis, in gaiety, pleafures, and the charms of elegant fociety, it is fuperior in my eftimation to Berlin, to Stockholm, or to Copenhagen. But no portion of apathy or indifference can enable me to fhut my eyes on the deplorable condition of Poland, or even to forget its actual fituation. "Homo "fum; nihil humani a me alienum puto." He who can do otherwife, muft have loft all feelings of private compaffion, all fenfe of national honour, elevation, and independence. The King, however amiable in his private character, is only a victim of ftate, referved in all probability for new calamities; who feems defirous in the enjoyment of the prefent hour, to bury the recollection of paft misfortunes, as well as the profpect of future evils. Powerlefs and unfup-

unſupported, he appears to reſign himſelf to his fate; and after the convulſions which he has witneſſed, to allow himſelf to be borne down the ſtream of events, without farther effort for his preſervation or extrication. The nobility, thinned by years of civil war, plundered, and degraded, yet ſunk in diſſipation, or ſold to foreign powers; excite only ſentiments of concern, blended with contempt. The inferior orders are hardly objects of pity: oppreſſed, enſlaved, and ſtrangers to the enlightened love of their country, which we denominate patriotiſm, they can ſuffer little by a change of maſters: except in the ſuppreſſion of a name, they will undergo no material alteration. In ſome ſenſe their condition will even be ameliorated; ſince whatever perſonal or domeſtic grievances they may have to ſupport, they will at leaſt be protected againſt foreign depredation or invaſion.

These are the melancholy reflections which the present state of Poland necessarily excites. Its dismemberment can only be considered as the prelude to its total dissolution; but time alone can ascertain when, and in what manner so great an event will be accomplished. My next letter will probably be from Dantzic or Thorn.

LETTER XXII.

Journey from Warſaw to Konigſberg.—Compariſon of Konigſberg and Berlin.—State of Dantzic.—Deſcription of Thorn.—Particulars reſpecting Copernicus.—Journey from Thorn to Breſlaw.—Remarks on that city, and on Sileſia.

BRESLAW, *September* 15, 1778.

AFTER a ſtay of near two months at Warſaw, I left it on the 28th of July, for Konigſberg; but as no poſts are eſtabliſhed through that part of Poland, it was requiſite to hire ſeven horſes to conduct us to Willenberg, the firſt Pruſſian town, all of which were drove and managed by a ſingle poſtilion. I quitted Warſaw with a mixture of pleaſure and of regret. Its ſociety and amuſements might agreeably detain a ſtranger, if their impreſſion

ſion were not counteracted, and in a great meaſure effaced, by the national miſery and degradation to which he is hourly a witneſs. It characterizes every thing in Poland, and purſued me to the frontiers. On the evening of my departure from Warſaw, at only a few leagues diſtant, I lay down, more from neceſſity than choice, in a wretched hovel inhabited by Jews. There I paſſed the night, ſtretched on dirty ſtraw, among ducks, pigs, Poles, and Jeweſſes; devoured by vermin, and unable to ſleep on account of the heat, as well as the ſmells which annoyed me.

I reached the borders of Pruſſia on the following day, and arrived at Konigſberg, after a fatiguing journey, on the firſt of Auguſt. The accommodations in the inns, or poſt houſes, are nearly ſimilar to thoſe of Poland. But in all reſpects elſe, the tranſition from one country to the other is a pleaſing one, and cannot fail to ſtrike the moſt careleſs obſerver. If Frederic oppreſſes and impoveriſhes, he at leaſt ex-

tends protection to his fubjects, and allows no inferior tyrants to plunder them. In Poland, the impotence of the government, and the unreftrained prerogatives of the nobility, fpread univerfal ruin. I was furprifed at the fertility, cultivation, and population of the greater part of the territories of his Pruffian Majefty through which I paffed. At the beginning of the prefent century, Pruffia was almoft a defart, ravaged by the plague, and without inhabitants. Frederic William the late King, with a policy equally enlightened and humane, reftored its profperity by remitting the taxes, and by timely donations of money to the people. His fon, the great Frederic, however enlarged his mind and views may be in many refpects, has not followed the example. During the whole courfe of his reign, it is certain that he has manifefted a diflike for this part of his dominions, which he never deigns to vifit in perfon, and towards which he even expreffes a fort of alienation. While he never fails

fails annually to inſpect Sileſia, and the provinces on either ſide of the Viſtula, he diſdainfully averts his eyes from the kingdom and people of Pruſſia. More than twenty years have elapſed ſince he laſt honoured them by his preſence.

Konigſberg, like Moſcow and Prague, is only a capital in name, not the reſidence of a Court. It poſſeſſes nevertheleſs many points of ſuperiority above Berlin or Potzdam, neither of which cities can compare with it in the advantages of local poſition. The river Pregel, upon which Konigſberg is built, exceeds in magnitude the Havel and the Spree, as much as the ſurrounding country excels in beauty and fertility the barren ſands of Brandenburg. By the Pregel, Konigſberg communicates at a few miles below the city, with the Baltic; and its vicinity to the Ruſſian provinces, particularly Livonia, enables it to maintain the cloſeſt relations, either hoſtile or amicable, with Peterſburgh. Behind it lie the northern provinces of Poland, many of the moſt va-

luable productions of which are exported from Konigsberg. Berlin as well as Potzdam, are destitute of commerce, and derive their principal support from the presence of the Sovereign. It must however be admitted, that these disadvantages are in some measure compensated by the central situation of the present capital. The Prussian dominions extend irregularly, from the Rhine and the German Ocean on the west, to the frontiers of Courland and Lithuania. Berlin is undoubtedly better calculated for keeping up a prompt communication with the Courts of London, Paris, and the Hague; as well as for watching every movement of the Cabinet of Vienna, and extending timely protection or assistance to the members of the Germanic System. We may therefore consider it as highly improbable, that the seat of government will ever be transferred from Brandenburg to Prussia.

Continuing my journey through Elbing and Marienburg, I arrived at Dantzic, where I made some stay. This celebrated city, situated

ſituated near the mouth of the Viſtula, in the moſt delicious country, and in the happieſt poſition for trade, excites at preſent only ſenſations of concern and commiſeration. It is evidently much declined in population, induſtry, and riches, ſince I laſt viſited it, only four years ago. Frederic holds it cloſely inveſted, though without the appearance of hoſtility; and there can be little queſtion that the blockade will finally compel the inhabitants to ſurrender on terms, if not at diſcretion. They ſtill indeed nouriſh hopes of interpoſition from Catharine, who cannot ſee without jealouſy ſuch an addition to the political and commercial power of the King of Pruſſia. But he has always found means, either by terror or by conciliation, to mollify, and even to diſarm the Court of Peterſburgh. Maſter of the Viſtula above and below the city of Dantzic; poſſeſſed of the ſuburbs; and gently, but ſyſtematically coercing the place, he has already deſtroyed its commerce in a great degree. The period of its

political

political extinction may, like that of Poland, be haſtened or protracted from many cauſes: but I ſhould incline to ſuppoſe, that it cannot be very diſtant. There is no object of acquiſition or aggrandizement, upon which Frederic has kept his eye more invariable fixed; and there are few within his graſp, which will when accompliſhed, contribute more to increaſe his importance in the ſcale of the Baltic and European powers.

In my journey from Dantzic to Thorn, where I arrived on the 5th of this month, I had an opportunity of ſeeing the rich and valuable tract of country which Frederic has acquired by the partition of Poland. It extends chiefly along the banks of the Viſtula, almoſt from the gates of one city to thoſe of the other; and no portion of the north of Europe, Livonia not excepted, is ſuperior to it in fertility of ſoil. Nearly at the ſouthern termination ſtands Thorn, as Dantzic is placed at the other extremity to the north. Both have been

hitherto

hitherto ſpared by his Pruſſian Majeſty; but it is only a reſpite, the reſult of policy, not of moderation. Thorn, which was founded by the Teutonic knights in the thirteenth century, long continued free, under the *protection*, not the dominion of Poland. It divided with Dantzic the trade of all the interior provinces of that country; and was, during the flouriſhing periods of its government, ſo rich as well as powerful, that the city maintained a body of three thouſand regular troops in conſtant pay. At preſent the military force is dwindled to a hundred ſoldiers. Forty Ruſſians, commanded by an enſign, have likewiſe been recently admitted into the place; chiefly with a view of preventing the Pruſſians from making any attack by open violence. Frederic will however probably attain by more artful gradations, the object of his ambition. He knows how to reduce the city, without employing artillery, or the formality of a ſiege. He has already ſeized on the territory of Thorn,

ſtraitened the acceſs to it, and effectually confiſcated their revenues, by erecting cuſtom-houſes on the Viſtula, which levy exorbitant duties on every article of importation or exportation. In fact, depopulation and decay are viſible in every ſtreet. Since 1772 the inhabitants have diminiſhed a third part, from fifteen to ten thouſand; and they are ſtill annually decreaſing. Expoſtulations and reclamations are vain againſt force. While England, Holland, and Ruſſia are paſſive, Poland cannot protect itſelf. In a few years Thorn will, according to all appearance, be ſwallowed up in the Pruſſian Monarchy.

Whatever may be its political fate, the name of Thorn will always recall to the mind a man, whoſe deep reſearches aſcertained the principle only ſurmiſed by antiquity, upon which reſts the Newtonian ſyſtem of philoſophy. Nicholas Copernicus, or Kopernic, has immortalized the place of his birth and reſidence. Every particular relative to him excites curioſity; and after viſiting

ing his houſe as well as his tomb, I endeavoured to obtain ſome information concerning his family. It is not a little remarkable, that ſo ſublime a diſcovery ſhould have originated in a part of Europe the moſt obſcure, and hardly civilized, while it eſcaped the finer genius of Italy and of France. Though a part of the building has been deſtroyed by fire, the chamber is ſtill religiouſly preſerved, in which Copernicus was born. His remains are buried under a flat ſtone, in one of the ſide aiſles of the moſt ancient church of Thorn. Above, is erected a ſmall monument, on which is painted a half-length portrait of him. The face is that of a man declined in years, pale and thin; but there is in the expreſſion of the countenance ſomething which pleaſes, and conveys the idea of intelligence. His hair and eyes are black, his hands joined in prayer, and he is habited in the dreſs of a prieſt. Before him is a crucifix, at his foot a ſkull, and behind appear a globe and compaſs. He died in

1543;

1543; and when expiring, is ſaid to have confeſſed himſelf, as long and uniform tradition reports, in the following Latin verſes, which are inſcribed on the monument. They demonſtrate that when near his diſſolution, all cares or enquiries, except thoſe of a religious nature, had ceaſed to affect or agitate him.

"Non parem Pauli gratiam requiro,
"Veniam Petri neque poſco; ſed quam
"In crucis ligno dederat latroni,
"Sedulus oro."

Monſieur Luther de Geret, counſellor of the ſenate of Thorn, furniſhed me with ſome information relative to the illuſtrious perſon in queſtion; and as ſo little is aſcertained of his origin or family, it merits to be preſerved. "The father of "Kopernic was a ſtranger, from what "part of Europe is totally unknown. He "ſettled here as a merchant, and the archives "of the city prove that he obtained the "freedom of Thorn in 1462. It ſeems "clear that he muſt have been in opulent "circumſtances, and of conſideration; not "only

" only from the liberal education which he " beſtowed upon his ſon, but from the rank " of his wife. She was ſiſter of Luca Wat- " zelrode, biſhop of Ermeland, a prelate de- " ſcended from one of the moſt illuſtrious " families of Poliſh Pruſſia. The name of " the father, as well as of the ſon, was " Nicholas. To the patronage of his ma- " ternal uncle, the great Copernicus was " indebted for his eccleſiaſtical promotions; " being made a prebend of the church of " St. John at Thorn, and a canon of the " church of Frawemberg in the dioceſe of " Ermeland. Of his private life we know " little. He did not reſide here altogether, " nor did he die here; his body having been " brought to Thorn for ſepulture from " Ermeland, where he expired. A dyſen- " tery, accompanied with a partial palſy, " produced his death. In his character, as " well as in all his deportment, he was mo- " deſt, diffident, and religious. It is not " either known or believed that he left " behind him any natural children. But the

"the family continued to reſide here, as "appears by a manuſcript chronicle ſtill "exiſting, in which it is mentioned, that "'On the 11th of Auguſt 1601, died Mar-"tin Kopernic, barber, of the kindred and "poſterity of Nicholas Kopernic; a young "man unmarried and wealthy, of an apo-"plectic fit, at his garden in the ſuburbs.' "In his perſon we apprehend the name to "have become totally extinct."

The Viſtula oppoſite to Thorn is broad, and acroſs it extends a bridge, which I paſſed on my journey to this city. All Europe, I believe, cannot produce ſuch another, it being compoſed entirely of looſe planks placed on wooden piles or pillars, at a conſiderable height above the water. There is no ſort of railing or fence on either ſide; and though exceedingly long, it is ſo narrow that two carriages cannot poſſibly paſs in any part. So looſe indeed are the boards, and ſo frail is its conſtruction, that it is impoſſible to drive over it without ſhuddering. Our firſt day's jour-

ney from Thorn lay through the newly acquired dominions of his Pruſſian Majeſty, which previous to the partition of Poland conſtituted part of the province of Cujavia. But ſo unaſcertained are the limits of theſe recently ſequeſtered territories, and ſo deſirous is Frederic of extending and enlarging them, that it is difficult, if not impoſſible, to know what are their boundaries. His troops have either advanced or receded during the laſt ſix years, as the reclamations of the Court of Peterſburgh have been ſtrong or gentle. I paſſed through various villages which had been occupied by the Pruſſians, and afterwards reſtored to Poland. But the fate of that unhappy country is not yet finally decided.

Entering next day the palatinate of of Gneſna, which is ſtill avowedly ſubject to Staniſlaus, we reached a town called Chercova, towards evening, where with the utmoſt difficulty I procured a miſerable room and bed. No poſts being here eſta-

 bliſhed,

bliſhed, we were obliged to hire ſix very indifferent horſes of the Jews, conducted by two Poles, who more reſembled ſavages than poſtilions. The morning was very rainy, and we had ſcarcely advanced a league from Chercova, when, in croſſing a bridge compoſed of looſe planks, like that of Thorn, the drivers not having exactly taken the middle, the boards tilted up, and precipitated us into the ſtream. It was fortunately rather a torrent than a river, and as the diſtance was neither conſiderable, nor the depth great, I ſoon made my eſcape out of the carriage. The glaſſes and one of the wheels were broken by the fall; nor was it till after a conſiderable time that, with the aſſiſtance of ſeveral peaſants, the chaiſe was again raiſed up, and we proceeded ſlowly towards the next town. But the horſes having tired in the midſt of a wood, where the ſand reached nearly to the axle-tree, after many ineffectual efforts, it became neceſſary to ſend a ſervant for aſſiſt-

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ance. He returned in an hour, bringing fresh horses, who drew us to Jaroczin, where we found some refreshment at an inn kept by Jews; a race of people to whom, notwithstanding their extortion, travellers are under the greatest obligation while passing through this inhospitable portion of Europe. At Cojmin, the town in which we remained during the night, neither furniture, beds, nor provisions were to be procured in the inn, if such it could properly be called; and I was glad to lie down on the floor littered with clean straw.

I reached the Silesian frontiers on the ensuing morning, and gladly quitted Poland; a country in which it is difficult to imagine, or to exaggerate, the extent as well as variety of human wretchedness! Breslaw is a fine city, hardly inferior in population to Warsaw; and if we except the palaces in the Polish capital, far superior to it in regularity, beauty, and the

marks of opulence or civilization. Frederic, who knows its importance, has adopted every art in order to engage the affections of the inhabitants, and to obliterate their ancient predilection in favor of the House of Austria. He never fails to visit them annually, distributes favors among them, and has constructed cazernes, with a view to relieve the citizens from the inconvenience of lodging his soldiery. But it is on the tenure of arms that he rests his best hopes of the security of Silesia. In time of peace a garrison of eight battalions is usually maintained in Breslaw. At present, when he is in person at the head of his forces in Bohemia, he has left only about four thousand men in this city; an evident proof how little apprehension he entertains that the Austrians will attempt to invest it, or to reconquer Silesia. I am just returned from looking at the spot rendered memorable by the battle of Breslaw, in November, 1757, which was fought partly

in

in a plain without the place, and partly in the ſuburbs of St. Nicholas. Indeed, the whole ſurrounding country has been fertilized with human blood, in the courſe of the conteſt between Auſtria and Pruſſia, for this valuable and extenſive province.

To-morrow I ſet out for Dreſden.

LETTER XXIII.

Aſpect of Dreſden, and ſecurity of that capital.—Benefits reſulting to Saxony from the Pruſſian alliance.—Journey from Breſlaw to Dreſden.—Examination of the campaign of 1778.—Juſtification of the King of Pruſſia's military plan.—Anecdotes of that Monarch.—His retreat to Schatzlar.—Entrance of Prince Henry into Bohemia.—He retires into Saxony.—State of the Prince and his army at the cloſe of the campaign.

DRESDEN, *October* 8, 1778.

IT is ſcarcely poſſible to recognize this city, which I quitted laſt November, or to conceive the change produced by a few months. Dreſden then enjoyed profound tranquillity; and the inhabitants, engaged in all the amuſements or occupations of a poliſhed capital, looked forward to the probable continuance of peace and repoſe. Now, every thing announces

nounces war, and the place is converted into a garriſon. Nothing can be more ſtriking than the tranſition; nothing more animating than the ſcene. Pruſſian huſſars and Saxon Cuiraſſeers, mixed with cavalry and dragoons, croud the ſtreets. The inns and private houſes are filled with priſoners and hoſtages to the very roof. Even the ladies talk only of war, and diſcuſs or criticiſe the military operations of the campaign with no ſmall ability.

If we except, however, the general fermentation produced by ſo great and unexpected an event, together with ſome augmentation of the public expence neceſſarily reſulting from an increaſed military eſtabliſhment; Dreſden has not hitherto experienced any of the calamities uſually attendant on war. The Elector goes out to hunt as uſual at Moritzburg; parties of pleaſure are made at ſeveral leagues diſtant, without the ſlighteſt apprehenſion of danger; and all the environs of the capital are protected from inſult or devaſtation. A

 ſmall

ſmall party of Croats, who ſwam acroſs the Elbe above the city ſome days ago, and who as haſtily repaſſed the river again into Bohemia, are the only enemies that have yet appeared. If ſo extraordinary a degree of protection and ſecurity, at a moment like the preſent, does not prove the wiſdom of the Government; it certainly ſeems to demonſtrate the ſuperior advantage reſulting to Saxony from an alliance with Pruſſia, rather than with Auſtria. Only twenty-two years ago, at the commencement of the great war of 1756, before hoſtilities began, all Saxony was over-run by Frederic's troops. The electorate was ravaged, the capital bombarded and plundered, the King of Poland driven from his hereditary dominions to take refuge at Warſaw, and his army ignominiouſly made priſoners of war at Pirna; while the imperial forces were reduced to be ſpectators of theſe diſaſters, which they could neither prevent nor revenge.

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At preſent, the ſame Prince who humbled and cannonaded Dreſden, extends to it complete protection. The gates are confided to Pruſſian troops; the money of Brandenburgh is current in all payments or contracts; and the moſt perfect cordiality ſubſiſts between the two ſovereigns, as well as between their reſpective ſubjects. The name of Frederic, ſo long held in execration throughout this country, which bled under his oppreſſion, is now pronounced with veneration. They ſeem only to remember his valor, ſkill, and military reputation. All the animoſities of former reigns are now done away by preſent neceſſity; and at a time when the campaign is rapidly drawing to a cloſe, only a few predatory incurſions have diſturbed the interior tranquillity of Saxony.

So ineſtimable an advantage is not however to be wholly aſcribed either to the ſuperior activity and energy of Frederic; or to the incapacity, tardineſs, and inferior military ability of the Auſtrian commanders. It

It refults in a great degree from the nature of the country itfelf, and the local pofition of Drefden in particular. Though this capital is fituated within a very few leagues of the Bohemian frontiers, yet as Saxony is bounded by mountains and defiles towards Bohemia, the approaches are difficult, hazardous, and either impeded by fnows during many months of the year, or eafily defended againft an invader. On the contrary, notwithftanding the portion of territory by which Berlin and Drefden are feparated, exceeds a hundred miles in extent; the intermediate country is almoft all flat, open, and indefenfible, except by a fuperior army, at the rifk of a general engagement. Happily for Saxony, policy and intereft have dictated at the prefent moment, a clofe alliance with Pruffia; whofe Sovereign now appears as the champion of the Germanic fyftem and liberties, while he is the peculiar advocate of Saxony, the Electrefs Dowager being fifter and allodial heirefs to the late Elector of Bavaria. We may

may however venture ſafely to aſſert, that while the preſent order of things, and the preſent balance of power remain unchanged in Germany; no advantages which the Court of Vienna can hold out to Saxony, will ever compenſate for the calamities neceſſarily reſulting from a rupture with Pruſſia. This is a truth of which the preſent Elector, inſtructed by his grandfather's experience, ſeems to have the fulleſt conviction.

I arrived here on the 19th of laſt month, after croſſing a fine part of Sileſia, and the whole of Luſatia, which latter province belongs to Saxony, and is in every reſpect one of the moſt beautiful of the German Empire. They derive additional charms from the contraſt which every village and every cottage preſent to thoſe of Poland. At Parchwitz, a little town in Sileſia, I was only about twelve leagues from the great Pruſſian army, under the King's command, in Bohemia: but Frederic neither permits viſitors, nor accepts volunteers. The Engliſh

liſh are particularly obnoxious to him; and it is certain that he has never ſincerely loved the nation at any period of his reign, however neceſſity may have driven him to form alliances with Great Britain. He has not forgotten the unpaid ſubſidy of 1762; and he deprecates, not without ſome reaſon, the animadverſions or criticiſms which foreigners of our deſcription might preſume to paſs upon his military conduct. "Je "ne veux pas de chambre baſſe au milieu "de mon armée," ſaid he, in reply to an application made him lately, to permit ſome Engliſh officers to ſerve as volunteers in his camp. Perhaps, if we rightly conſider the matter, he cannot juſtly be blamed for his determination on this point.

Sileſia and Luſatia are claſſic ground in modern hiſtory, and may not improbably form the ſcene of ſome future epic poem, of which Frederic will be the hero, and his victories or dangers the principal ſubject. It is impoſſible not to have him conſtantly preſent to the mind and imagination, while travelling

travelling from Breſlaw to Dreſden. As well might we viſit the Troade, without recalling Hector or Achilles, at every ſtep. I drove acroſs the plain of Liſſa, where he completely defeated the Auſtrians under Prince Charles of Lorrain, in December 1757; and over that of Lignitz, where he extricated himſelf at one of the moſt perilous moments of the laſt war, in Auguſt 1760. Surrounded by three great armies, and apparently on the very point of extinction, it was only by routing Laudohn, that he there preſerved his crown and life. At the end of twenty years, it is curious to behold him and his brother Henry again oppoſed almoſt on the ſame ground, to the ſame Generals, Lacy and Laudohn. Near Bautzen in Luſatia, I left at a ſmall diſtance, the heights memorable for the defeat of Hohkirchen in 1758, where Marſhal Keith was killed. How many penſive reflections muſt neceſſarily ariſe in the mind of his Pruſſian Majeſty, when he reviews, as he now does, the theatre of his early proweſs!

With

With what ſenſations muſt he not reviſit the ſcene of his alternate triumphs and defeats! How frequently muſt he behold in idea, the numerous commanders who periſhed in his quarrel, and over whoſe graves he is actually contending in the evening of his reign! After eſcaping unhurt from ſo many perils, he is now leading to battle the grandſons of thoſe, who fought and conquered under his ſtandard at Mollwitz.

Dreſden appears to me ſtill more agreeable on this ſecond viſit, than at the firſt: the environs are beautiful, far ſurpaſſing even thoſe of Vienna. They form a ſtriking contraſt to the tame, depopulated expanſe which inveſts Warſaw, and not leſs to the ſterile ſands that ſurround Berlin and Potzdam. But independent of local ſuperiorities, other circumſtances render it at preſent the moſt intereſting place of reſidence in Europe. The vicinity of four great armies; the number of officers of rank who are continually paſſing; its ſituation,

tion, at ſo inconſiderable a diſtance from the theatre of war, that every event which happens in either camp, is known here in a few hours afterwards: all theſe things make it far more amuſing than either Berlin or Vienna, which by their remote poſition know little except from report. Here every movement and every action are canvaſſed with equal freedom and ſeverity. Converſation and ſociety derive animation from the ſcene performing before us; and I ſee nothing in Dreſden which ſeems to have eſcaped the contagion, unleſs perhaps it be the Elector himſelf.

Infinite are the ſpeculations, and various the opinions, on the paſt campaign; for ſuch it may now, I believe, be termed, as the two Pruſſian armies are already retiring, or retired out of Bohemia, and the military operations are at an end. It is not probable that the Auſtrians, who have hitherto ſyſtematically acted on the defenſive, will ſuddenly change their plan, and purſue the retreating enemy into Saxony. Certainly

no campaign in the courſe of the preſent century, has more diſappointed expectation, produced fewer events, or been attended with ſo inconſiderable an effuſion of blood. There are not wanting perſons here, who criticiſe the King of Pruſſia's and Prince Henry's conduct, with extreme ſeverity. They ſay, the great Frederic in 1778, is no more himſelf, than was Prince Eugene in 1734. They accuſe him of wanting enterprize, of fearing to commit his reputation to hazard, and of allowing his troops to waſte away in inaction. "After paſſing many months," ſay they, "in remonſtrances and delays, which he "ought to have employed in arms, and "thereby giving the Auſtrians time to "prepare for his reception, he at length "enters Bohemia. What has he done? "Has he opened a way to Prague? Has "he given battle to Joſeph the Second? "Did he vanquiſh the obſtacles to his "junction with Prince Henry? No! He "could not effect any one of theſe objects.

After

" After ravaging and desolating some of " the northern circles of Bohemia, from " which he has only carried off a few " hostages; he and his brother, alike frus- " trated in all their views, have already " fallen back upon Saxony and Silesia. " Far from attacking the enemy's lines, " as he did at Prague, at Torgau, and on " so many other occasions during the great " war of seven years; we have neither seen " a siege, nor even a skirmish which de- " serves the name. The campaign is " closed; and the Emperor, who never " yet was present at a battle, nor beheld an " army except at the ceremony of a re- " view, has foiled, and obtained a nega- " tive victory over the greatest commanders " of the present age. If the Prince Royal " had led on the Prussians, we should " have been more successful, and at least " have given battle to the enemy. Fre- " deric has survived himself, and is no " longer the same hero who fought at Ros- " bach, at Torgau, and at Cunersdorf."

 Such

Such are the animadverſions paſſed on his conduct, by thoſe who cenſure the preſent campaign. I confeſs that the facts and arguments are at firſt ſight calculated to make an impreſſion; but on examination they will be found, in my opinion, no leſs unjuſt than unmerited. It is true that the campaign, which has been ſterile in great events, offers nothing brilliant to the imagination. Frederic has neither atchieved the conqueſt of Bohemia, nor the capture of Prague. I will even admit that his antagoniſt, by compelling him to retire into his own dominions, has acquired a degree of reputation at his expence. But allowing theſe principles, where has been the want of ability, enterprize, or ardour, in his Pruſſian Majeſty? Let us examine diſpaſſionately.

The war originates in the ſeizure of a part of Bavaria by the Court of Vienna. If Frederic had not remonſtrated; if he had invaded Bohemia or Moravia, as he did in 1756, inſtead of ſending reclamations and

manifeſtos to Maria Thereſa, he might probably have acquired more laurels; but he certainly would not have proved to all Europe, that he is animated by no other motive than the protection of the Germanic liberties. Such a cauſe, and ſuch a conviction, outweigh in their effect the moſt brilliant victory. After fully demonſtrating his moderation and anxious wiſh for peace, he at length has recourſe to arms. Entering Bohemia on the Sileſian quarter, he advances into the kingdom, and finds Joſeph the Second, with Lacy at his ſide, entrenched behind the Elbe, in an inacceſſible camp, on the heights of Koningingratz; having under his command not leſs than a hundred thouſand ſoldiers. Prince Henry of Pruſſia penetrates at the ſame time on another quarter, where he meets Laudohn advantageouſly poſted, who impedes his further progreſs, or his approach towards the King. Joſeph declines, and even prohibits all offenſive or hazardous operations, with the moſt unremitting ſoli-
 citude,

citude, though far ſuperior in force. Flanked by Laudohn on his left, and by Haddick on his right, while he was ſupplied with proviſions from his own dominions in his rear; how could Frederic, under ſuch diſadvantages, and at every poſſible riſk, force the Emperor to a general action? That he did not want the inclination, had it been practicable without the greateſt temerity, is inconteſtable, ſince he made every effort for the purpoſe, but in vain. The Emperor's determination to bear all inſults, and to ſee his provinces ravaged, rather than hazard an engagement, was ſyſtematic and inſuperable.

About the middle of Auguſt, while he was encamped at Jaromirz in Bohemia, Frederic rode out one morning with his nephew, the Hereditary Prince of Brunſwic, in order to reconnoitre the enemy's poſition, and to judge whether there was no means of compelling them to a battle. "Eh bien, mon neveu," ſaid he, after long examining their camp with his glaſs at

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his eye, "qu'en dites vous? N'y a t'il pas "moyen d'attaquer ces gens la?"—"Oui, "Sire," anſwered the Prince, "il y a "bien moyen; et je repondrai à votre Ma-"jeſté de forcer les lignes, et d'entrer dans "les trenchées l'epée à la main. Nous "remporterons la victoire; mais la moitié "de votre armée ſera flambée." The King was too wiſe to wiſh to purchaſe even victory at ſo dear a rate, which muſt have incapacitated him for effectually pro-fiting of it in an enemy's country. Con-tent with having cooped up and immured the Imperial army, though ſuperior in numbers to his own; after having ſub-ſiſted his troops for two months at the ex-pence of Bohemia, finding it impoſſible to form a junction with his brother, he gave orders to fall back to Schatzlar, near the frontiers of Sileſia.

Never was retreat conducted with more conſummate ſkill. It was, by the univerſal teſtimony of Pruſſian and Saxon officers, the triumph of the military art; every move-

ment having been made with the accuracy of machinery, unaccompanied by hurry, embarraſſment, or confuſion. Lacy vainly attempted to take advantage of the King's ſituation, by attacking his rear: not a man was loſt in the retreat, nor the ſlighteſt advantage gained over the Pruſſian troops. The Prince Royal eminently diſtinguiſhed himſelf on the occaſion; and Frederic was ſo charmed at the diſplay of cool intrepidity joined to military talents in his conduct, that forgetting his uſual coldneſs to the Heir Apparent, he embraced him in preſence of all the Generals. "Vous n'eſtes plus mon "neveu," ſaid he, "vous eſtes aujourd' "huy mon fils." At Schatzlar the King ſtill continued to maintain himſelf ſeveral weeks in defiance of the Auſtrians; deſolating the northern circles of Bohemia, and carrying off contributions. He is now fallen back into his own dominions, or into thoſe of Saxony, where he remains; and whence, ſhould the war continue, he will be able to open the campaign early in

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the enſuing ſpring, under more favourable circumſtances.

After this ſhort, but accurate ſtatement, I leave you to decide whether his enemies can juſtly compare him to Prince Eugene in his decline, or aſſert with reaſon, that he has ſurvived his talents. Let us now examine Prince Henry's conduct, who commanded the other Pruſſian army; and who, on entering the territories of the enemy, found inſuperable obſtacles to his progreſs, or to his junction with the King. So completely had the Auſtrians occupied the paſſes by which alone it was ſuppoſed he could penetrate into Bohemia, that they conſidered it as impoſſible for him to overcome the difficulties in his way. It was only by profiting of their confidence in their own ſtrength, and by movements equally rapid, maſterly, and unexpected, that he entered the circle of Leutmeritz, through defiles either unknown to the Auſtrians themſelves, or regarded by them as impervious to a body of troops. By this able ma-

nœuvre he made priſoners fourteen hundred men ſtationed at Gabel, chiefly Italians, who were ſurprized at finding themſelves inveſted and captured, before they knew or ſuſpected the approach of an enemy.

Prince Henry, while advancing towards Prague, was nevertheleſs obliged to contend with impediments almoſt inſurmountable. Laudohn, and Prince Charles Lichtenſtein, who were oppoſed to him, aſtoniſhed that he had rendered abortive all their precautions, fell back, and allowed him to reach Budin. During the march he remained for three days ſeparated from his artillery; a circumſtance of which if the Imperial Generals had been apprized, they doubtleſs might have attacked him with almoſt a certainty of ſucceſs. Laudohn, like his maſter the Emperor, and probably by his immediate direction, contented himſelf with adopting a defenſive plan, calculated to check the Prince's further progreſs. He occupied a camp at Munchengratz, ſo ſtrong

as

as to be inattackable; and ſo ſituated, as while it covered the capital of Bohemia, to cut off all means of junction, or even of communication, between the King and his brother. Of the numerous couriers who were ſent under every poſſible diſguiſe, from one to the other, ſuch was the vigilance of Laudohn, that none ever ſucceeded in reaching his deſtination, or conveying intelligence.

Thus foiled in his endeavours to form a junction with the great Pruſſian army, and unable to force Laudohn in his lines, Prince Henry had no reſource except to retire out of Bohemia. He has done ſo unmoleſted, and yeſterday reached Giſhibel, a village belonging to Saxony, not far from Pirna. The difficulties with which he had to ſtruggle in his retreat, ariſing from the badneſs of the roads, the mountainous nature of the country, and the advanced ſeaſon, were ſuch as could only have been ſurmounted by equal fortitude, perſeverance, and ſkill. But how

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how a general ſuch as we know Laudohn to be, ſhould have allowed the Prince to evacuate Bohemia, without falling upon his rear, we are here at a loſs to conceive. Encumbered as he was with baggage, and dragging after him a train of heavy artillery, it would have been almoſt impoſſible to prevent ſome loſs or diſaſter. He has carried off immenſe contributions, and filled this city with hoſtages or priſoners of war. I will not however attempt to deny or conceal, that ſome degree of diſſatisfaction is known to exiſt between Frederic and his brother, who partly impute to each other the failure of more complete ſucceſs in their operations. It is likewiſe ſaid, that the King highly diſapproves the ſpirit of play which has pervaded the camp, and even the tent of the Prince. We know that he on his part is ſullen, gloomy, and out of humour. He remains encamped at Otterſdorf, a few miles diſtant, and permits his general officers to viſit Dreſden, but declines to do ſo himſelf,

himſelf. Platen and Mellendorf are now here. The cavalry, Saxon and Pruſſian, is deplorably ruined, owing to the neceſſity of harneſſing all the horſes, in order to draw the artillery out of the Bohemian defiles. The road from hence to Otterſdorf is ſtrewed with the bodies of horſes, either dead, or expiring of fatigue and ill uſage: but the infantry is in good condition, and has comparatively ſuffered little from the campaign. Here I ſhall cloſe the preſent letter, and remain,

Yours.

LETTER XXIV.

Review of the Saxon hiſtory.—Auguſtus the Second and Third.—Reign, death, and character of Frederic Chriſtian.—Character and anecdotes of the reigning Elector of Saxony, Frederic Auguſtus.—Electreſs of Saxony.—Prince Charles.—Anecdotes of the Electreſs Dowager.

DRESDEN, *October* 13, 1778.

BEFORE I quit this capital and country, it is natural that I ſhould ſay ſomething of the Sovereign and the Court of Saxony. During a period of near ſeventy years, when the Electors were Kings of Poland, the Crown, though it continued to be elective, was almoſt conſidered as hereditary in the Saxon line. It may however be juſtly doubted, whether except the title of King, and the honours annexed to it, any real advantage accrued to Saxony from the elevation of their Princes to the Poliſh throne.

throne. Auguſtus the Second expended a great part of his Electoral revenues at Warſaw, either in maintaining himſelf on that tottering and venal eminence, or in purchaſing the ſuffrages of the principal nobles and eccleſiaſtics in favour of his ſon. His numerous gallantries, his expenſive taſte, his extraordinary vigour of body, and his munificence, have rendered Auguſtus the Second not a little diſtinguiſhed in the hiſtory of the preſent century. Even his natural ſons conduced to immortalize their father. Marſhal Saxe, who was one of them, fills perhaps a greater place in the annals of time, than his legitimate brother, Auguſtus the Third, King of Poland. His mother was the beautiful Counteſs of Konigſmark, whoſe brother, the ill-fated lover of Sophia Dorothea, Princeſs of Zell, periſhed at Hanover, in the manner which I have already related.

Auguſtus the Second died only forty-five years ago, of a mortification in his foot, cauſed by a blow which he gave himſelf when

when ſtepping into his coach. The diſeaſe originated in a corrupt habit of body, as two of his toes had been already amputated, previous to the accident which terminated his life. He was certainly an amiable and accompliſhed Prince, brave, humane, generous, and endowed with talents for captivating mankind. But never was any Court more diſſolute than that of Dreſden under his reign. What ſhall we ſay of a Sovereign, who, as Lady Wortley Montague aſſures us, and ſhe knew him perſonally; wooed the Counteſs of Coſel, by throwing at her feet a bag containing ten thouſand Louis d'ors, with one hand; while with the other he broke a horſe ſhoe, and flung the pieces on the ground, as a proof that his ſtrength was not inferior to his generoſity! What are we to think of a man, who on hearing that the regent Duke of Orleans had expired in the arms of Madame de Valori, lifting his eyes and hands to Heaven, exclaimed, "Ah! que je meurs "de la mort de ce juſte!" It is the King of

of Pruſſia himſelf who relates this anecdote of Auguſtus; the wit of which is far exceeded by its indecency and profligacy.

Notwithſtanding the vices of his adminiſtration, the enormous waſte of money which his Poliſh kingdom occaſioned, and the devaſtation of Saxony by Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, who, after dethroning Auguſtus, allowed his victorious troops to live at free quarters in the Electorate: notwithſtanding theſe misfortunes of his reign, his memory is dear to the Saxons, who remember only his magnificence, his affability, and the ſplendor of his Court. The late King of Poland, Auguſtus the Third, bore no reſemblance to his father in the principal features of his character. He inherited the bodily ſtrength, but not the activity or addreſs of his predeceſſor. Mild, indolent, and deſtitute of energy, he was not formed to cope with ſo formidable a neighbour and antagoniſt as the preſent King of Pruſſia. Calculated for times of peace and repoſe, his

his abilities were unequal to ſituations of emergency or difficulty. In the protection of all the arts, and in the gratification of his paſſion for muſic as well as painting, he knew hardly any bounds. During more than twenty years, from his acceſſion in 1733, to the commencement of the great war in 1756, no Prince in Europe could vie with him in theſe reſpects. Happy in the midſt of his numerous family, the illegitimate branches of which were ſcarcely leſs dear to him than his own ſons; occupied in forming the famous "Gallery of Dreſden," or in aſſembling the fineſt orcheſtra that Germany had ever ſeen; Auguſtus devolved the cares of government on his Miniſter and favourite, Count Bruhl.

But the calm ſo long enjoyed by Saxony, uſhered in a period of unprecedented calamity. Relying on his connections and alliances with the Houſe of Auſtria, he imprudently entered into the ſecret machinations which Maria Thereſa, ſupported by Elizabeth Empreſs of Ruſſia, ſet on foot to reduce

reduce the power, and divide the dominions of the family of Brandenburgh. Frederic having anticipated the execution of the plan, by meaſures of equal vigour and deciſion, Saxony became the ſacrifice to Auguſtus's want of foreſight, and injudicious plans of aggrandizement. The remainder of his life was only a tiſſue of miſfortune, aggravated by diſgrace. He ſaw Dreſden laid almoſt in aſhes, his enemy maſter of the Electorate, his army reduced to ſurrender at diſcretion, and his own perſon ſcarcely ſecure among his elective ſubjects at Warſaw. His wife, the late Queen of Poland, daughter of the Emperor Joſeph the Firſt, a Princeſs of exemplary piety and virtue; endeavoured to oppoſe a feeble barrier to Frederic's military ſeverity. Her days were embittered, and her end accelerated by the Pruſſian exactions, of which, for ſeveral years, ſhe was a reluctant ſpectatreſs. Hardly was Auguſtus reſtored to his capital and hereditary dominions, by the peace of 1762, when death terminated

his reign. Saxony, at his deceafe, exhibited a deplorable picture of depopulation, mifery, and defolation, not to be exceeded by any thing of which the prefent age furnifhes an example.

His eldeft fon and fucceffor would neverthelefs, unqueftionably have been elected King of Poland, if, by a fingular fatality, he had not followed his father to the grave, in the fpace of a few weeks. So deep a root had the Saxon Family taken in that country, by the uninterrupted poffeffion of the Crown ever fince the deceafe of John Sobiefki, that neither the intrigues nor the armies of Catharine could probably have raifed any other candidate to the throne. But the forms neceffary previous to the election of a Sovereign, and the time that elapfed from the demife of Auguftus to the period of filling the vacancy as prefcribed by the Polifh conftitution, removed the only obftacle to the Emprefs's views. The new Elector was carried off by the fmall-pox, at Drefden, in the vigour of his age,

age, on the 17th of December 1763, after a reign of only ten weeks. His premature end overturned all the projects of the Court of Saxony, and enabled Catharine, in defiance of every impediment, to confer the Crown of Poland on Count Poniatowſki.

Thoſe who were acquainted with the late Elector, Frederic Chriſtian, aſſure me that he was an enlightened and an amiable Prince. His parts were not brilliant, but his judgment was ſound, his underſtanding ſolid, and his mind enlarged. Like all his predeceſſors ſince Auguſtus the Second, who in order to attain the Crown of Poland, renounced the proteſtant tenets, he profeſſed the Catholic Faith. His adherence to the Romiſh communion did not prevent him from giving the moſt conſpicuous demonſtrations of a liberal mind. During his ſhort reign, he conferred offices of the higheſt truſt indiſcriminately on his ſubjects of both perſuaſions; and immediately after his acceſſion, he began by naming four Lutheran "Dames d'Honneur"

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to attend on the Electrefs. This innovation, the refult of a fuperior underftanding, was foon repreffed on his deceafe.

In his perfon and figure, the late Elector was eminently unfortunate. His face, arms, and breaft, were well proportioned, and when feated at a table, he prefented the appearance of a handfome man; but from his waift downwards, he was deformed, his thighs and legs being crooked and entirely contracted. Many reafons have been affigned for fo unhappy a conformation. The moft common, and that which has obtained general belief in Saxony is, that his mother, the late Queen of Poland, while breeding, was fo affected at the fight of a deer, which being fhot in the haunch, was dragged before her, the legs trailing along the ground and bleeding; that it occafioned the deformity of her fon. It is difficult to believe, but more difficult to difprove, fo extraordinary a ftory. Whatever was the caufe, the effect was irremediable, and baffled all medical fkill.

ſkill. Baths of every kind were reſorted to in vain, for the reſtoration of his limbs; and phyſicians from every part of Europe were conſulted to no purpoſe. The Elector remained a cripple during his whole life.

To Frederic Chriſtian ſucceeded his eldeſt ſon, a minor of thirteen; but the adminiſtration of Saxony was intermediately committed to Prince Francis Xavier, his uncle. The reigning Elector, Frederic Auguſtus, is in the prime of his age, not having yet completed his twenty-eighth year. Of a middle ſize, inclining rather to ſhort than tall, his limbs are neither active nor muſcular, though he poſſeſſes ſound health and a ſtrong conſtitution. Over his whole figure there is diffuſed ſomething eaſier perceived than deſcribed, altogether deſtitute of grace, and deficient in dignity. Nor are his manners calculated to compenſate for the want of perſonal accompliſhments. In his addreſs he is ſhy, diſtant, and reſerved. Coldneſs and inanimation characterize his behaviour,

 pervade

pervade his converſation, and accompany all his actions. He diſplays none of the gracious and communicative diſpoſition which almoſt equally characterize in different ways, his three cotemporaries, Frederic the Second, Staniſlaus, and the preſent Emperor.

In more ſolid endowments, in application, ſtrength of mind, and talents for government, the Elector is by no means deficient. His reign has hitherto been a happy one for his ſubjects, whoſe true intereſts he has diſcernment to perceive, and whoſe felicity he has ſufficient principle to conſult, in preference to every other object of purſuit. It is not the aggrandizement of his houſe, the acquiſition of a precarious crown, or the extenſion of his dominions; but the ſecurity, protection, and renovation of Saxony, which regulate his ſyſtem of policy. Rigid in his morals, and tinctured with bigotry on articles of religious belief, he repreſſes with ſeverity the ſlighteſt devi-

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ations from propriety. No men or women of diſſolute characters will ever attain to favor or preferment under the preſent reign. In gallantry, whether of mind or perſon, he is totally deficient; and towards the ſex, conſidered as objects of paſſion, he is peculiarly cold. The Elector, though young, never entertained a miſtreſs, nor has he hitherto had any children, legitimate or illegitimate. He ſeems to be in a great meaſure inſenſible to the pains as well as the pleaſures of love; an exemption which perhaps equally entitles him to our envy and our compaſſion.

Frederic Auguſtus has no taſte for ſplendor or the luxurious magnificence of a court, like his two predeceſſors the Kings of Poland. All his amuſements are ſober, temperate, and confined to a ſmall number of perſons. He dances, it is true, at the court-balls in Carnival, and is fond of that diverſion, if he can with propriety be ſaid to be fond of any thing. Twice every week he goes to hunt at the palace of Moritzburg;

ritzburg; but he is accompanied by ſcarcely any attendants or courtiers. For the arts he betrays no partiality; and though the celebrated gallery of paintings, collected by his grandfather Auguſtus the Third at an immenſe expence, communicates with, and is in effect a part of the Electoral Palace, he rarely viſits it. That fine repoſitory of the works of the great maſters, Italian and Flemiſh, is left for the inſpection of ſtrangers. His Pruſſian Majeſty, when maſter of Saxony during the late war, found leiſure amidſt dangers internal and foreign to paſs ſome hours every week in contemplating the models of excellence aſſembled at Dreſden.

The Elector, though not diſtinguiſhed either by his patronage or paſſion for the arts, is nevertheleſs a prince of a cultivated underſtanding. In natural philoſophy and various other branches of knowledge, he has made conſiderable progreſs. He is muſical, and performs with execution on the harpſichord: yet even his muſical

pleaſures

pleaſures are ſolitary, and he rarely, if ever, permits any one to be preſent on thoſe occaſions. For military affairs he has never manifeſted any inclination. He wears indeed frequently an uniform; but though the parade where his guards and troops exerciſe daily, is ſituated within a hundred paces of the palace, he ſcarcely ever appears there, and contents himſelf with inſpecting them from the windows of his apartments. Had he felt a diſpoſition to ſignalize himſelf in the field, he might have found an occaſion at this moment, when an Emperor and a King are both at the head of their reſpective armies, the one to attack, and the other to defend his Electorate! It is well known that Prince Henry of Pruſſia, a commander ſcarcely inferior to any of the preſent age, and of years ſo much more advanced, offered to ſerve under the Elector, if he had been diſpoſed to take the field. The propoſal was declined.

Count Marcolini, his only favourite, and his conſtant companion, is an Italian,

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lian, about five-and-forty years of age, who having been formerly a page of honour in the Court of Saxony, became known to Frederic Auguſtus at an early period of life. Of a diſpoſition amiable and conciliating, he has improved the opportunities which his place and ſituation afforded, to attain the higheſt degree of perſonal favour with his maſter. He has in fact neither rival nor competitor, for the eminence which he occupies. Count Stutterheim fills the employment, and performs the functions of firſt Miniſter; but Marcolini, without the oſtentation or reſponſibility of office, poſſeſſes no inconſiderable ſhare of political influence.

In whatever point of view we ſurvey the Elector, his characteriſtic is a tranquillity of mind approaching to apathy. Thoſe who know him moſt intimately, aſſert that he is never greatly agitated by any purſuit or occupation. If he hunts, it is not ſo much from natural ardour for the chace, as from a conviction that the exerciſe is ſalu-

tary and beneficial to his health. He neither takes a lively intereſt in his palaces, nor his horſes, nor in the company of ladies, nor in the converſation of his courtiers. Of courſe he is ſeldom betrayed into thoſe weakneſſes which originate from ſenſibility, the chief ſource of refined gratification. Diſtant and retired, he neither inſpires warm attachment in others, nor is he animated with ſtrong affection for thoſe about him. A confined education, joined to elevated ideas of his own rank, have added ſtrength to his habitual reſerve. But his defects are private and perſonal, terminating in himſelf: while his virtues are public, and diffuſe happineſs through his dominions. He will not indeed, be remembered in future ages, by his protection of talents, by his valour, or the magnificence of his diſpoſition, like Auguſtus the Second. But his reign will probably be recollected and commemorated as an æra, from which Saxony, plunged into every ſpecies of misfortune by the extravagance

or

or incapacity of its Princes, revived under the wiſe government of an economical and pacific Sovereign.

The reigning Electreſs, his wife, Maria Amelia Auguſta, is of the Houſe of Deux-Ponts, and was born in 1752. Her perſon is tall, elegánt, and dignified, though perhaps ſhe cannot ſtrictly be termed handſome, as her face is marked with the ſmall-pox. She has fine hair in prodigious quantity, a fair complexion, eyes by no means deſtitute of expreſſion, and an intereſting countenance. Her manner, which impreſſes at firſt with the idea of diſtance and reſerve, becomes on nearer acquaintance, eaſy, affable, and pleaſing. In converſation ſhe is lively and communicative; without poſſeſſing either ſuperior talents, or a very cultivated underſtanding. Her life, like that of Princeſſes in general, is uniform, and deſtitute of gaiety or variety. She goes indeed regularly to the comedy, to the chace, and to the country: but the Elector commonly accompanies her on theſe occaſions, which

which can ſcarcely be denominated parties of pleaſure. The Electreſs has little taſte for ſedentary amuſements; a circumſtance the more to be regretted, as ſhe paſſes many of her private hours in ſolitude or ſecluſion, without company of any kind. Muſic and painting form her principal reſources. Over her huſband ſhe is ſuppoſed to poſſeſs no political influence; and their marriage, which hitherto has not been productive of iſſue, may be conſidered rather as an alliance of ſtate, than as an union of mutual inclination.

Her ſterility muſt be regarded as more than an ordinary misfortune to the Elector and to Saxony; ſince Prince Charles, who is his next brother, and his preſumptive heir, labours under all the varieties of deformity which can meet in the human frame. I have the honour to know him, and to ſee him frequently. Scarron himſelf muſt have been handſome, compared to Prince Charles of Saxony, whoſe face, hands, body, legs, and feet, are all more or leſs diſtorted. Incapable

capable of walking, ſtanding, or mounting a horſe, on account of his numerous infirmities, he is wheeled about from one apartment to another. Under ſuch an accumulation of corporeal ailments, he is nevertheleſs chearful, converſible, and almoſt gay. One ſhould be tempted to ſuppoſe by his converſation and deportment, that he is not unhappy. From neceſſity, not leſs than from inclination, he has cultivated his mind, the only part of his formation which admits of improvement. It is ſingular that he was not born in a ſtate of deformity, but gradually became ſo at the age of eleven or twelve, previous to which time his limbs were apparently well made: he is now about ſix-and-twenty. Such a perſon ſeems to be incapacitated by his infirmities for marriage. Yet, as the Elector has no children, and the ſucceſſion would by his death devolve on Prince Charles, the Electreſs Dowager his mother wiſhes to procure him a bride. For the honour of human nature and of wedlock, it is to be hoped that the

project

project will never be carried into execution.

As there remain two younger brothers, the Princes Anthony and Maximilian, who have already attained to manhood, and who labour under no bodily defects; it can hardly be esteemed necessary in order to prevent the extinction of the Saxon male line in the present House. No event can indeed be apparently more improbable at this time than such a failure. But should it ever take place, contrary to all appearances; and of course, the reigning, or "Albertine branch," become extinct, the Electoral dignity, and the Saxon dominions, (after passing through the surviving sons of Augustus the Third, if such there were remaining alive,) would revert to the elder, or "Ernestine branch," now reigning at Weymar. Germany would then witness one of the most extraordinary events which its internal history presents: namely, the restoration of the descendants of John Frederic, Elector of Saxony, to their

their ancient patrimonial title and territories. He was despoiled and degraded after the battle of Muhlberg, by the Emperor Charles the Fifth, above two centuries ago. You will recollect that the virtuous and unfortunate Prince in question, for his adherence to the Protestant Faith, no less than for his generous resistance to the Imperial power, was deprived of his Electoral dominions and dignity, which Charles conferred on his cousin Maurice, and his male descendants. In their line it still continues: but by subsequent stipulations it was settled, that if they ever became extinct, the posterity of John Frederic should be again reinstated in their original honours and possessions. This is the case, which though highly improbable, I have stated to be possible, should the present Elector and his three brothers die without male issue.

The Electress Dowager, Maria Antonietta, mother to the four Princes above-mentioned, may be denominated in every sense, a distinguished woman. She is

daughter

daughter to that moſt unfortunate Prince, Charles the Seventh, who, from Elector of Bavaria, was raiſed by France to the Imperial dignity in the year 1741. Driven by Maria Thereſa out of his hereditary dominions, and long compelled to take refuge in an inn at Francfort; he ſoon afterwards terminated his days, a victim to ambition. His daughter, of whom I now ſpeak, was born in 1724; and if I may judge from her preſent infirmities, as well as her broken ſtate of health, does not promiſe to attain to a very advanced age. In her perſon, even when young, ſhe never can have been agreeable. Her figure is ſhort, her face red, marked with the ſmall-pox, and little calculated to procure admiration. Yet, in ſpite of ſo many natural diſadvantages, an air of ſenſe and intelligence illuminates her countenance. Few Princeſſes poſſeſs more knowledge of the world, more gracious manners, or greater powers of pleaſing in converſation. Miſtreſs of various languages, acquainted with the human

 heart,

heart, and ingratiating in her addreſs, ſhe conduces not a little to render the Saxon Court agreeable to ſtrangers. Her ambition is not inferior to her talents; but ſhe has at preſent no field on which to exert them, as her ſon the Elector no longer conſults her on matters of a public nature, nor allows her to interfere in political affairs. Fruſtrated of the Crown of Poland by her huſband's death, at the moment when ſhe ſeemed about to be raiſed to the throne; and now removed from the active ſcenes of ſtate, ſhe happily finds reſources in her love of letters. A patroneſs of the Arts, ſhe has adorned her mind by the peruſal of the works of the fineſt writers in moſt European languages. I was ſurprized to find her ſo well verſed in ours; and I have too many obligations to her, for the diſtinguiſhed manner in which ſhe has treated me during my ſtay here, not to ſpeak of her with a degree of gratitude allied to partiality.

My reſidence at Dreſden now draws to a cloſe, as I am about to ſet out for Munich. I would willingly paſs through Bohemia; but it is ſtill a ſcene of war, and though hoſtilities between the great armies have ceaſed, there is no communication open from this city to Prague. I muſt therefore of neceſſity take my courſe through Freyberg, the Upper Palatinate, and Ratiſbon.

Adieu.

LETTER XXV.

State of Ratiſbon.—Bavaria.—Aſpect of the country.—Munich.—Character and anecdotes of the Elector Palatine, Charles Theodore.—Explanation of the pacific ſyſtem adopted by that Prince.—Court of Munich.

MUNICH, *November* 3, 1778.

IN my way from Dreſden to this city, I paſſed near a week at Ratiſbon, which without being in a ſtate of ſiege, is as completely inveſted at preſent by the troops of Maria Thereſa and Joſeph, as Dantzic is by the forces of Frederic. Ratiſbon is built on the ſouthern bank of the Danube, oppoſite to which, on the northern ſide, ſtands the little town of Amhof, at the diſtance of ſcarce a hundred yards. Two bridges, one of ſtone, the other of wood, connect them, the river being divided into

into two ſtreams at the ſpot. We were ſtopped on our arrival, by the Auſtrian ſoldiers poſted at Amhof; of which the Court of Vienna took poſſeſſion, in common with the reſt of Lower Bavaria, upon the deceaſe of the late Elector, about ten months ago. It muſt be confeſſed that Ratiſbon is thereby placed in the moſt critical and perilous ſituation, ſurrounded on every ſide by the Imperial troops, who may, at any moment, enter the city, and ſequeſter it in virtue of ſome antiquated pretenſion. After the recent ſeizure of ſo conſiderable a portion of the Bavarian ſucceſſion, what part of the German Empire can be regarded as ſecure? The terror occaſioned by it, has already operated univerſally; and it has even been agitated to remove the Diet from Ratiſbon, where that aſſembly has been held for ages, to ſome other place more protected from violence. The reſult of the preſent war between Auſtria and Pruſſia, will determine how far the Germanic ſyſtem is, or is not likely to

continue unviolated; a queſtion which can only be decided by arms.

From the gates of Ratiſbon to thoſe of Landſhut, a ſpace of more than fifty miles, the whole intermediate country is occupied by Maria Thereſa's troops, and become in all reſpects incorporated with her other vaſt dominions. It is a very fertile portion of Bavaria, producing immenſe crops of grain, and muſt prove, if finally retained, an ineſtimable acquiſition of power and reſources to the Houſe of Auſtria. The population is not inferior to the exuberance of the ſoil; and when its local poſition is conſidered, which protects the weſtern frontier of the Empreſs Queen's territories, where ſhe is moſt vulnerable, I am not ſurpriſed that Pruſſia and Saxony have oppoſed ſo important an augmentation of her ſtrength. At Landſhut commence the actual dominions of the Elector Palatine, as Duke of Bavaria, which continue uninterruptedly to Munich; but the tract is by no means ſo

fine

fine as that recently ſeized by the Court of Vienna.

The Bavarian peaſants appear to me a race of men far inferior to the Saxons in bodily formation, and not leſs in the plenty and riches of their farms, as well as in cultivation of manners. Superſtition and poverty, blended with diſtreſs, are viſible in every village, and almoſt in every countenance. Such a contraſt may partly reſult from phyſical cauſes, but muſt be principally attributed to the genius of the government. The approaches to Munich bear no ſimilarity either in beauty or in fertility, to the environs of Dreſden. For many miles before I arrived here, the country, which is level, exhibits few marks either of induſtry or of riches. The city of Munich itſelf, though large, handſome, and full of elegant buildings, wants the vivacity and gaiety of the capital of Saxony. It muſt however be admitted that the mountains of the Tyrol form a ſublime and picturesque object, extending acroſs the whole horizon to the ſouth, at the

diſtance of twenty leagues, their ſummits covered with perpetual ſnow.

It is not a little curious and ſtriking, to find Munich in profound repoſe, the Court occupied in amuſements, and no indication or appearance of war, at a moment when Auſtria, Pruſſia, and Saxony are contending for a part of Bavaria itſelf. The Elector Palatine, who as it would ſeem, ſhould, not leſs from inclination than from neceſſity, have drawn his ſword, in order to maintain the integrity of the ſucceſſion devolved to him, remains paſſive and neutral in his own quarrel. He even ſanctions the uſurpation of a conſiderable part of his territories, and legitimates, as far as he is able, the violence of the Imperial Cabinet. How are we to account for ſuch a line of conduct, in a Prince hitherto conſidered as neither puſillanimous, nor incapable of defending his rights? How are we to reconcile it to the ordinary maxims of political intereſt, or of private honor? I will endeavour from the lights

which

which I poſſeſs, to explain in ſome meaſure the ſecret motives of ſo extraordinary and myſterious a policy.

Charles Theodore, the reigning Elector Palatine, is no longer young, nor under the influence of any paſſions except ſuch as are compatible with, if they do not contribute to, his felicity and repoſe. Endowed with judgment, and poſſeſſed of no mean abilities, he is nevertheleſs unambitious, and more attached to his pleaſures, than deſirous of aggrandizing his houſe, or extending his dominions. In attention and application to public buſineſs he is not deficient. His leiſure is principally divided between the gratifications of appetite, and the purſuits of literature, to both of which he alternately ſacrifices. He no longer rides or hunts, having renounced for theſe ten or twelve years paſt, the diverſion of the chace, on account of a dizzineſs to which he is ſubject: but in the conviviality of the table he indulges freely. As a Sove-

a Sovereign, compelled to the obſervance of certain forms, he dines every day in public, about one o'clock: he ſups in private, and at theſe ſelect parties the Elector lays aſide all reſtraint. Ladies contribute to animate the converſation, which is not confined within the limits of ſeverity. His female attachments have not, however, at any period of his life, been diſtinguiſhed by delicacy or ſelection of choice. On the contrary, they have rather been marked by oppoſite characteriſtics. Few princes now living, none perhaps except the King of Pruſſia, have cultivated their minds more aſſiduouſly, or with greater ſucceſs. His reading is extenſive; and to the information derived from books, he adds the advantages of travel, as well as a perfect knowledge of mankind. He has viſited Italy, and reads the works of the poets and hiſtorians of that country, ancient and modern, in their original languages. In Engliſh, I am aſſured he is not leſs converſant. Though a Catholic, he is by no means a bigot; and if

if we try him by the ordinary ſtandard of princes, he certainly occupies a place much above mediocrity.

When young, for he is now fifty-four, he was married to his couſin, a princeſs of the ſame branch of the Palatine family from which he is himſelf deſcended. She is ſtill alive, but they have never had any iſſue. The Electreſs, Maria Elizabeth of Sulzbach, who was born in 1721, is near four years older than her huſband. Neither her face nor her figure can ever have had any pretenſion to beauty; but ſhe is a woman of parts and ſpirit. In her ſterility is to be diſcovered the leading cauſe of the Elector's political conduct. Deſtitute of legitimate deſcendants, and without hope of any by his preſent wife; ſucceeding as Duke of Bavaria, to a Prince whom he did not love; and unattached to his preſumptive ſucceſſor the Duke of Deux-Ponts; he feels no ambition to tranſmit entire the Palatine ſucceſſion to a collateral and diſtant heir. All his affections and inclinations are converted

into

into another channel. He has five natural children, two male and three female, for whom he feels the warmeſt attachment. One of them, who is married to Frederic William, Prince of Iſſembourg, is now here at Munich. The Imperial Court, well informed of the Elector's ſentiments political and private, has profited of his partiality towards his illegitimate iſſue. Prince Kaunitz has found means to convey to him aſſurances on the part of Maria Thereſa and Joſeph, that, in return for his neutrality and acquieſcence in their claims on Bavaria, they will provide in a diſtinguiſhed manner for all his natural children. Nor have they neglected to awaken his jealouſy, and excite his reſentment, at the oppoſition which he has experienced from the Duke of Deux-Ponts.

Influenced by theſe conſiderations, particularly the former, Charles Theodore hitherto holds firm to his convention with the Houſe of Auſtria. Neither the murmurs of his new ſubjects, who feel for the humili-

humiliation of the Bavarian line and name, nor the remonſtrances of Pruſſia and Saxony, can induce him to take up arms in his own cauſe. He ſees with philoſophick indifference, the moſt beautiful portion of his dominions torn from him by foreign violence. It is however, matter of reaſonable doubt, how long he can perſiſt in ſo paſſive a ſyſtem. Thoſe who have acceſs to him in his private hours, aſſert that he is viſibly uneaſy and diſturbed; that he wiſhes to drown reflection; and as the beſt means of effecting it, that he has recourſe to the ſame expedient which Alexander uſed, when deſirous of avoiding the importunity of thought. I am aſſured likewiſe, that in his own family he experiences the moſt pointed oppoſition, not to ſay the ſevereſt reproaches. The Electreſs his wife, as a Princeſs of the Palatine family, feels for the wounded dignity of her huſband; and the Ducheſs Dowager of Bavaria her ſiſter, ſprung from the ſame origin, participates in the Electreſs's emotions.

tions. When alone with the Elector, they expreſs their ſentiments in language of the utmoſt aſperity, and endeavour to rouſe him from his inaction. Time will ſhew how far theſe efforts can ſurmount his affection for his natural children, added to his love of repoſe.

I was preſented to his Electoral Highneſs a few days ago. His manner is rather polite than dignified; nor do the lines of his countenance, which are harſh and ſtrong, prepoſſeſs at firſt ſight in his favor. He has a large forehead, black eyebrows, his noſe hooked and prominent; his figure manly, but not graceful, of a middle ſize, inclining towards corpulency. In general he wears an uniform, and the inſignia of no leſs than three orders of knighthood. One is the "Golden Fleece," ſent him by the Court of Vienna on his acceſſion to the Bavarian dominions, as a mark of conciliation and reſpect, at the very moment when they were deſpoiling him of his territories.

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The Court of Munich does not ſtrike me as brilliant, though the Palatine and Bavarian Nobility are in ſome degree united here under a common Sovereign. Nor is the Electoral Palace either a regular or a beautiful ſtructure. One apartment, a bed-chamber, the furniture of which coſt a hundred thouſand pounds ſterling, was fitted up by order of the late Emperor, Charles the Seventh. After ſurveying the ſplendid chamber which he occupied when living, it was a curious tranſition to deſcend into the obſcure ſubterranean vault where he now repoſes, in the church of the Theatins. His remains are depoſited in a ſimple coffin, compoſed of block tin, and on it this inſcription:

"Carolus Septimus,
"Romanorum Imperator,
"Semper Auguſtus."

Cloſe by his ſide, unconſcious of the wars which at this moment deſolate Europe, to which he has given riſe, is laid the Elector his

his ſon, who died only a few months ago. Such a ſcene is calculated to awaken many reflections; but as they would be rather gloomy and philoſophical, than of a cheerful deſcription, I leave them to your own ſuggeſtion, and conclude by informing you that to-morrow I ſhall ſet out for Vienna.

RAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL ✱ THE TANJORE

LETTER XXVI.

General opinions entertained at Vienna, relative to the conduct of the campaign.—State of Vienna and of the Court.—Arrival of the Emperor.

VIENNA, *November* 28, 1778.

AFTER having viſited the Poliſh, Saxon, and Bavarian capitals, I flatter myſelf that you will not be diſpleaſed to return with me once more to Vienna. I arrived here from Munich three weeks ago. The Court, as well as the metropolis at large, ſeem to be plunged into a ſort of melancholy and gloomy repoſe, which has ſucceeded the late campaign. I ſee no marks of exultation, and I hear no panegyrics on the Emperor's military atchievements. If the conduct of Frederic is ſeverely criticized at Dreſden, that of Joſeph is loudly reprobated

at Vienna. I dined yeſterday at Prince Coloredo's. On my right hand ſat an officer of diſtinction, who had ſerved in the Moravian army during the whole ſummer; and we diſcuſſed the operations of the two leaders, as well as their reſpective claims to approbation and applauſe.

" Never," ſaid he, " ſince the acceſſion " of the reigning Empreſs, during eight- " and-thirty years, have the Auſtrians ex- " hibited ſo inglorious a ſpectacle to Europe " as in the campaign of 1778. We have " indeed in former periods been more un- " fortunate; we have been defeated and " put to the ſword: but we have never yet, " with ſuperior numbers, at the beginning " of the campaign, in the midſt of our own " territories, and poſſeſſing all the means of " offenſive war, ſubmitted to be ſhut up " and beſieged within our lines. At the " moſt diſaſtrous period of the late war in " 1757, after the defeat which we ſuſtained " at Prague, Daun would not have adopted " ſo humiliating a plan, though he might

" have

" have been juſtified in purſuing it. If " ever offenſive operations were neceſſary " in order to inſpire the troops with ardor, " they were ſo in the preſent campaign. It " was indiſpenſable, after a peace of fifteen " years, to ſhew the Auſtrian ſoldier that he " was not inferior to the Pruſſian, either in " diſcipline, in courage, or in leaders. But " what has the Emperor done? He has im- " preſſed an indelible conviction on all his " officers and ſoldiers, that whatever may " be the juſtice of his cauſe, he feels his " inability to maintain it in the field. He " has tacitly admitted the Pruſſian ſuperi- " ority. From the inacceſſible heights of " Konigingratz, Joſeph beheld the fineſt " provinces of Bohemia plundered, with- " out daring to make an effort for their " defence. Frederic has carried off immenſe " contributions, and deeply imprinted the " terror of his arms in every village, and on " every inhabitant. Was any exertion " made to impede his retreat out of Bohe- " mia, when loaded with plunder? None.

" He retired without our daring to moleſt " him, and he will return far more formi- " dable in the enſuing ſpring.

" But, our misfortunes and our diſgrace do " not ſtop here. The preſence of the Em- " peror has diffuſed them over every part of " the military operations, and prevented " our ſucceſs, where, without his inter- " ference, it would have been equally cer- " tain and brilliant. Though the King " effected his retreat without confuſion to " Schatzlar, in ſight of the Emperor and " Marſhal Lacy; Prince Henry of Pruſſia " could not have retired into Saxony under " the eyes of Laudohn. That able comman- " der, who was encamped at Munchengratz; " after effectually preventing the junction " of the two armies, only waited for the fa- " vorable moment of action. He knew the " impediments to Prince Henry's retreat, the " ruined condition of his cavalry, the diffi- " culty of dragging his artillery, and the " impoſſibility of his making effectual re- " ſiſtance if vigorouſly attacked. Laudohn

" had

"had even formed all his difpofitions for the "purpofe, iffued his final orders, and was "about to execute them on the following "morning at day-break. Our fuccefs would "have been infallible. But, for our misfor- "tune, his Imperial Majefty arrived from "Konigingratz, in an open carriage, alone, "on the evening before the deftined attack. "All Laudohn's plans were inftantly re- "verfed; we remained inactive; and "Prince Henry, like the King his brother, "clofed the campaign triumphantly. It is "thus that we are facrificed, counteracted, "and difhonored. How can it be other- "wife? The Emprefs, we are not ignorant, "only wifhes for peace. The Emperor "breathes war, but knows not how to con- "duct it, though he afpires to fuperin- "tend all the operations in perfon. Prince "Kaunitz fluctuates between both; defirous "of repofe, yet anxious to gratify a Prince "whofe paffion is ambition, and who may "foon become his fole mafter. Such is the "actual ftate of our affairs."

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MAHARAJA SERFOJI

I confeſs myſelf not a little inclined to admit the juſtice of this picture, which is certainly true, though perhaps highly coloured. It is ſtamped in legible characters on every countenance here, and pervades every converſation. All the operations of war are however, for the preſent cloſed, or ſuſpended by the ſeaſon. Frederic at ſixty-ſeven no longer braves the ſnows, and keeps the field, as he did twenty years ago, when contending for his crown and life. He is retired into Sileſia, and has diſpoſed of his troops in winter-quarters. A ſimilar conduct is purſued by the Auſtrians. When I arrived here on the ſeventh of this month, I found all the great general officers already returned. Lacy, Laudohn, Prince Charles Lichtenſtein, had quitted the army of Bohemia; as Duke Albert of Saxe-Teſchen had done that of Moravia. The Archduke Maximilian was ſcarcely recovered from a long and ſevere illneſs, with which he had been attacked in the camp at Konigingratz. The Emperor alone, abſent in Bohemia, was ſtill

ſtill occupied in iſſuing directions relative to the cantonment of the forces, and inſpecting the frontier. As ſome compenſation for his abſence, the Great Duke and Ducheſs of Tuſcany came here in September, on a viſit to the Empreſs Queen; but their preſence, whatever conſolation it may afford her, is far from diffuſing hitherto the ſlighteſt degree of gaiety over the Court and capital. They remain almoſt conſtantly ſecluded in the Imperial Palace, without mixing in any of the amuſements of Vienna.

After being long and impatiently expected, the Emperor reached this city five days ago, at ten in the morning of the 23d, from Olmutz. He came incognito in his poſt-chaiſe, with ſcarcely any attendants. In order to enjoy the pleaſure of ſurprizing the Empreſs, he did not permit his arrival to be announced; and having purpoſely taken his way through the leaſt frequented ſtreets of Vienna, he got undiſcovered to the palace. Quitting his carriage, he ran haſtily up a private ſtaircaſe which led to

her apartment, and before ſhe was prepared for it, he threw himſelf into her arms. Maria Thereſa's emotions at ſeeing her ſon again, were not leſs violent than they had been at his departure for Bohemia in April, and ſhe was for ſome minutes overcome by them. I ſaw the Emperor next day at court, there being a gala in honor of the Great Ducheſs of Tuſcany's birth-day, where he was preſent. He looks burnt and thin, as might be naturally expected, but otherwiſe in perfect health; and he aſſumed a gaiety of manners and deportment in the drawing-room, which appeared to border on affectation. No demonſtrations of joy, public or private, have followed his arrival, and the winter ſeems to begin under very unfavorable auſpices for a future reſidence at Vienna. Many of the great nobility, whoſe eſtates lie in the northern provinces of Bohemia, have ſuffered extremely by the Pruſſian and Saxon depredations. The inferior people murmur at the increaſe of taxes, and look forward with natural ap-

prehenſion,

prehenſion, to their probable augmentation. Almoſt every one ſeems to dread the continuance of war, and to hope that winter may not merely interpoſe a temporary ceſſation of hoſtilities, but produce overtures of peace. Time will ſhew whether their expectations are likely to be gratified.

I remain, &c.

LETTER XXVII.

Concern of the Empreſs at the birth of a French Princeſs.—Activity of the Emperor's character.—State of the public mind at Vienna, at the cloſe of the year 1778.

VIENNA, *December* 30, 1778.

MARIA Thereſa, in addition to the public ſources of uneaſineſs and anxiety which agitate her mind, is at this moment entirely occupied with a domeſtic misfortune, if ſuch it may be juſtly eſteemed; for it can in fact only be termed a diſappointment. Yeſterday a courier arrived from Paris, to announce that the Queen of France has brought into the world a daughter. After near nine years of ſterility, her pregnancy was an event which inſpired this Court with the livelieſt joy. All the labors of the Empreſs Queen and of her miniſter Prince Kaunitz, to blend the Auſtrian and Bourbon

Bourbon families, and to extinguiſh the long hereditary animoſities of the two Crowns, remain ſtill incomplete while there is not a Dauphin. The Queen of Naples and the Archducheſs of Parma, who are married to two other princes of the Houſe of Bourbon, have both performed this eſſential ſervice to the ſtate, and produced ſons. Maria Thereſa has omitted no exertions on her part, to enſure the like benediction on her youngeſt daughter. As the means which ſhe conceived to be moſt effectual, ſhe has wearied Heaven with prayers, and proſtrated herſelf before a variety of ſaints and altars, to obtain ſo great a boon. You will, perhaps, hardly believe that maſſes and ſupplications for the Queen's ſafe delivery, at which her Imperial Majeſty aſſiſted in perſon, have for ſeveral weeks paſt been performed publickly to a "Vierge groſſe" in one of the churches of Vienna. The dreſs and figure of the ſtatue of the Virgin in queſtion, repreſent a pregnant woman. The Empreſs's vows have

have not, for this time, been fully heard; but as the impediments to the Queen of France having iſſue, whatever they were, are now ſurmounted, her mother may ſtill reaſonably hope that time will accompliſh her moſt ſanguine wiſhes.

This inauſpicious event, joined to the preſſure of a war unqueſtionably originating in her own, or rather in her ſon's ambition, which threatens to involve the evening of her reign in great diſquietude, have added force to the Empreſs's habitual devotion. She is gloomy, penſive, and frequently in tears. The capital already feels the influence of ſuch a change, which clouds the chearfulneſs of ſociety; and will, it is believed, ſuppreſs all public teſtimonies of mirth or amuſement. Maria Thereſa has indicated her intention to prohibit the ridottos and maſked balls cuſtomary in the carnival. No one ventures even to intercede with her in behalf of theſe proſcribed diverſions; and unleſs the Emperor ſhould do ſo with warmth, there is not any

any profpect of their taking place during the prefent winter. His Imperial Majefty, though far lefs fenfible than his mother to the recent difappointment from Paris, is neverthelefs much fhut up, and conftantly occupied in his Cabinet. He comes feldom into company, and is rarely at Prince Kaunitz's, or Prince Coloredo's, as he frequently ufed to be before the war. On the firft day of the prefent month he dined, it is true, at Court in public, with the Knights of "the Golden Fleece," of which order he is chief and fovereign. But it is the only act of ftate at which he has affifted, or where he has appeared in perfon fince his return from Bohemia.

His indefatigable activity makes him, notwithftanding, prefent at every place where he conceives that his exertions can be ufeful or falutary. He neither confiders the renunciation of fleep, nor any degree of perfonal inconvenience, when the occafion demands his interference. A few days ago, at feven in the evening, a fire broke out near

near the palace of Schonbrun, about a mile beyond the extremity of the ſuburbs on that ſide, without the lines. As it raged violently for ſome time, apprehenſions were entertained that the Menagerie of Schonbrun might be endangered by the flames. The night was dark and cold: but no ſooner was the Emperor apprized of the circumſtance, than he inſtantly mounted his horſe, and gallopped to the ſpot. He gave directions for extinguiſhing the flames, aſſiſted in getting engines for the purpoſe, and remained there till the conflagration ceaſed.

Theſe demonſtrations of his attention to preſerve the tranquillity, and to provide for the ſafety of the capital, cannot however diſſipate the gloom occaſioned by the war, and by the mode in which it has been hitherto conducted. The voluntary ſuſpenſion of hoſtilities on both ſides, though pretty general, conduces little to tranquillize the public mind. Congreſſes are indeed mentioned as likely to take place in the courſe

of

of the winter; but the original cauſe of quarrel remains entire, while the Auſtrians continue to occupy Lower Bavaria, and refuſe reſtitution of any part of the ſequeſtered territories. A more ſerious ſubject of alarm appears to be ariſing on the ſide of Ruſſia. Frederic has found means to intereſt the Empreſs in his quarrel, if not as an open auxiliary, yet as a friend. It is well known that ſhe has expreſſed, through her Miniſter Prince Gallitzin here, the utmoſt diſapprobation of the conduct of this Court in the Palatine ſucceſſion. Her interpoſition, if ſincere and ſtrenuous, muſt be deeply felt by both parties. It is certain that preparations of every kind are making here for an early campaign. So ſtrong was the alarm of a recommencement of hoſtilities, only a fortnight ſince, that meaſures were taken to act in the field without delay. The departure of the Great Duke and Ducheſs of Tuſcany for Florence, was ſettled for the firſt week in January; and

and that of the Emperor to join the army in Bohemia, for the ſecond of the ſame month: but the report is now contradicted. Every day may however, in the preſent critical ſituation of affairs, produce ſome great event. You ſhall be informed of any occurrence that ariſes of moment.

Adieu!

LETTER XXVIII.

Aſpect of the Court.—Military Operations.—Capture of Habelſchwert.—Conduct of the Empreſs on that event.—Deſertions.—Diſcontent at Vienna.—Preparations for a ſecond Campaign.

VIENNA, *January* 27, 1779.

WE remain ſtill in the ſame ſituation, uncertain as to peace or war. The new year opened with the cuſtomary day of Gala, held on the firſt of January, at which their Imperial Majeſties, accompanied by the Archdukes and Ducheſſes, were preſent. But it was long believed that the Empreſs would not admit of any public entertainments during the Carnival, and ſhe actually perſiſted in her determination to the laſt moment. The interpoſition and remonſtrances of her ſon ſurmounted however, not without difficulty, her repugnance to theſe exhibitions, which are at length

allowed to take place in the uſual manner. The Emperor, attended by the Great Duke and Ducheſs of Tuſcany, appeared at one of the maſked balls; but except on this ſingle occaſion, Vienna has diſplayed ſcarcely any marks of feſtivity, and it is perhaps at preſent the capital of Europe the leaſt chearful.

The ſeverity of the winter has by no means altogether put a ſtop to the operations of war. Frederic, who is indeed retired to Breſlau, does not perſonally conduct theſe incurſions, as they may be termed; their object being principally plunder and contributions. His nephew, the Hereditary Prince of Brunſwic, ſupplies his place, and has made himſelf maſter of Troppau and Jagerndorf, the only two remaining diſtricts of Sileſia yet unannexed to the Pruſſian Monarchy. It is apprehended that he will maintain himſelf there till the opening of the campaign. If however the Auſtrians have been driven in, or worſted on that ſide, they have taken ample vengeance in another

another quarter, and obtained a very brilliant advantage over the enemy.

Colonel Palavicini arrived here a few days ſince, with intelligence of the ſurprize and capture of Habelſchwert. It is a fortified town of conſiderable ſtrength and importance in the county of Glatz; a diſmembered portion of Bohemia, reconquered by Maria Thereſa during the war of ſeven years; but, ceded anew to his Pruſſian Majeſty at the peace of 1763. The Prince of Heſſe Philipſtahl, who commanded in the place, together with his whole garriſon, are made priſoners of war. Count Kinſki and General Wurmſer, to whom the conduct and execution of the attempt was entruſted, have deſervedly gained great applauſe. Having rapidly aſſembled a body of troops, they marched during the night, favoured by the darkneſs; approached the walls in ſilence ſoon after daybreak; and inſtantly placing their ſcaling ladders, as Laudohn did formerly at Glatz and at Schweidnitz, they

mounted the ramparts before the enemy was aware of, or in any manner prepared for their attack. After a feeble defence, Habelschwert fell into their hands. Frederic must be deeply sensible to so unexpected an affront, as well as disaster; nor is it doubted that he will treat the Prince of Hesse as he did the unfortunate Finck, after the affair of Maxen.

The capture of Habelschwert opens one of the passages into Silesia, and may be followed by important consequences, if it is not speedily regained. As it may be denominated the first successful attempt to carry the war into the enemy's dominions since the commencement of hostilities, the intelligence is peculiarly grateful to the Emperor. It has occasioned the warmest demonstrations of joy throughout Vienna, and dissipated for an instant the gloom of the Imperial palace. Even Maria Theresa is not insensible to the event. When Palavicini, who arrived with the standards taken from the enemy, was presented to her; she

ſhe received the news with extraordinary ſatisfaction, and liſtened with the utmoſt complacency, while he related to her all the particulars of the ſtorm and ſurrender. Being informed that the inhabitants had ſuffered conſiderably by pillage, during the firſt fury of the troops, her heart was affected. Going to her bureau, ſhe opened it, and took from thence a bag containing five hundred ducats in gold; then putting it into Palavicini's hand, "I deſire," ſaid ſhe, "that this ſum may be diſtributed "in my name to the unfortunate ſufferers, "whoſe houſes or effects have been plun-"dered by my ſoldiery: it will be of ſome "little uſe and conſolation to them under "their misfortune." So ſingular an act of liberality and compaſſion towards the inhabitants of a Pruſſian town taken in war, has occaſioned much aſtoniſhment, and given riſe to a variety of opinions reſpecting its propriety, as well as wiſdom and policy. There are not wanting perſons here who cenſure her conduct with ſeverity, and

consider such munificence as ill bestowed. It is however impossible not to admire the motive, or not to do justice to the philanthropy and benevolence of Maria Theresa; qualities which have uniformly marked her character at every period of her life. Palavicini has been raised from a Colonel, to the rank of Major General.

This fortunate event is not the only one which has taken place within the last few days; another very considerable advantage having been gained by a body of Austrians over the enemy, in an action or skirmish near Zuckmantel in Silesia. A few more such would bereave the Prussians of that reputation which constitutes an important part of their superiority, and teach the Austrian soldier to regard himself as their equal. Frederic has moreover suffered immensely by desertion. I heard the Baron de Breteuil, the Ambassador of France, assert only two days ago, that he had himself given passes to more than thirteen thousand French deserters

ters from the Pruſſian army, the greater part of whom entered Auſtria over the bridge of Lintz. The Empreſs has likewiſe ſuſtained no inconſiderable loſs from the ſame cauſe; but far leſs than her adverſary, becauſe her armies are compoſed principally either of her native ſubjects, or at leaſt of Germans.

Notwithſtanding ſo many exhilarating circumſtances, the Court continues to be gloomy and joyleſs. The Great Ducheſs of Tuſcany's health, which is very precarious, increaſes the dejection: ſhe is at this time much indiſpoſed. Prince Kaunitz, who may be conſidered as a political barometer, is thoughtful, and has loſt his uſual good humour. The general officers are all diſcontented or diſguſted. They know the ſecret diviſions in the Cabinet, and are aware how much every operation of war will be counteracted by the Archducheſs Chriſtina's influence over her mother. They do not leſs deprecate, I believe, the Em-

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peror's presence and interference in the field. Even Joseph himself, instructed by experience, is thought to be no longer averse to pacific propositions. It is imagined that overtures to that purpose will be made through the Court of Petersburgh, as Prince Repnin is at Breslau with his Prussian Majesty, occupied, we understand, in concerting the preliminaries.

The prospect of peace does not however induce the Government to intermit their preparations to meet the approaching campaign. Very heavy taxes have been levied on the people, and proportionate exertions are making to raise a force, capable of facing Frederic in the field. The Emperor cannot intrench himself a second time in an inaccessible camp, and allow the Prussians to desolate his dominions, without totally breaking the spirit of his troops, which the late fortunate events have elevated. Three hundred and fifty thousand men, it is asserted, will be under arms in Bohemia and Moravia, before May. So prodigious a strength, properly conducted,

conducted, might enable Maria Theresa and Joseph to carry the war into Saxony or Silesia, and to dictate terms at the gates of Breslau, or of Dresden. Frederic, it is certain, cannot, even including his allies, bring into the field more than about two-thirds of the Austrian force. But his name, his cause, and the energy, as well as decision of his councils, may perhaps more than counterbalance the superiority of numbers. The campaign is expected to open betimes, and the shock must be terrible. We wait here with anxious solicitude for further information relative to peace.

I remain, &c.

LETTER XXIX.

State of ſociety at Vienna.—Female manners and education.—Diſpoſal of time.—Dreſs.—Style of beauty.—Severity of the Empreſs in reſtraining diſſipation.—Superſtition.—Men.—Defects of their education.—Literary prohibitions.—Ignorance of the upper ranks.—Opulence of the great Nobility.—Executions.—Police.—Spies.—Bigotry.—Belief in familiar ſpirits, and in the philoſopher's ſtone.—Laboratories.—Veneration for Paracelſus.—Belief in ſecrets to prolong life. Theatrical amuſements.—Univerſality of the French language.—Climate of Vienna.

VIENNA, *February* 2, 1779.

IT is time that I ſhould turn your attention from military preparations, to images of another kind; to the picture of manners, and the deſcription of private life. A reſidence of two winters in Vienna, added to a perſonal acquaintance with the far greater part of thoſe who compoſe its ſociety in the beſt

beſt ſenſe of the term; enable me to ſpeak with ſome information on the interior of this metropolis, its pleaſures, occupations, and inhabitants. Few European capitals offer more reſources to a ſtranger, who does not place his felicity in diſſipation. He will not indeed find here the productions of art, or the monuments of antiquity, which are to be ſeen at Florence, or ſtudied at Rome. The circle of pleaſures that Paris offers, or the more elevated range of mingled knowledge, buſineſs, and recreation afforded by London, are not, it is true, characteriſtic of Vienna. But the Auſtrian capital poſſeſſes all the requiſites for uſefully, as well as agreeably detaining a foreigner; and I ſhall always, in the review of the paſt, eſteem the time which I have paſſed here, among the beſt employed, as well as moſt pleaſing moments of my life.

It is not in Vienna, as with us, where a native of France or of Germany, however well born or accompliſhed, may paſs not only one, but many winters, in vain endeavours

endeavours to force his way into the ſociety of the Great. He is not driven here, as in London or in Paris, to the theatres and public places of diverſion, for a refuge from dullneſs. The common rallying point of pleaſure and relaxation is here found in the higheſt circles, to which he is immediately carried. Thoſe of Prince Kaunitz, and of Prince Coloredo, are the firſt into which every ſtranger of condition is introduced after his arrival. It is unneceſſary to repeat, that the former is Prime Miniſter and Chancellor of Maria Thereſa, as Queen of Hungary and Bohemia; while Prince Coloredo is only the Vice-Chancellor of Joſeph the Second, in his quality of Emperor of Germany. As both their houſes, which may be ſaid to form a part of the Imperial palace, are open every evening for the reception of company, they conſtitute a principal ſource of amuſement at Vienna. I may add, that it is an attention expected from a perſon who has been preſented to thoſe Miniſters, that he ſhould

frequently

frequently be ſeen of an evening in their drawing-rooms. There is not the ſmalleſt degree of conſtraint impoſed by Prince Kaunitz, who is uſually engaged at billiards, in a corner of the apartment; and every one is at perfect liberty to amuſe himſelf, either at play, or in converſation, as his inclinations may lead him. Nearly an equal freedom reigns at Prince Coloredo's, who, ſurrounded by his numerous ſons, daughters, and their deſcendants or connexions, unites to the utmoſt ſimplicity of manners, all the finiſhed breeding of a courtier and a gentleman. Every thing conduces to put a foreigner at his eaſe, and inſenſibly to diveſt him of the aukwardneſs or embarraſſment, natural on finding himſelf in the midſt of a ſociety, with whoſe habits and common topics of converſation he is unacquainted.

It muſt, nevertheleſs, be admitted that the Auſtrian manners are cold and reſerved on firſt acquaintance. There is a certain indolent indifference and tranquillity

which characterize them, as widely removed from our national taciturnity, as from the French frivolity, loquacity, and levity. Time, and a quiet, rather than a noiſy civility, ſoon ſurmount this barrier. The Auſtrian ladies are by no means deficient in external accompliſhments, mental and perſonal: they are in general elegant, graceful, and pleaſing; but rarely do they poſſeſs a cultivated mind. The principal reading of a woman of quality, is ſuch as tends to pervert and contract, rather than to enlarge and improve her underſtanding. Holy legends, lives of female ſaints and devotees, maſſes, and homilies, conſtitute her chief information. She knows little of Madame de Sevignè, and leſs of Racine, Moliere, or Fontenelle. If ſhe has peruſed the works of Cervantes and of Le Sage, ſhe has done much. With Saint Thereſa and Saint Catharine of Sienna, ſhe is familiar.

This want of improvement is univerſal, and the neceſſary reſult of their confined education. Young women of condition

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are all ſent to a convent, either at Prague, at Preſburg, or at Vienna. There they are taught to ſing hymns to the Virgin, and to tell their beads devoutly. Of hiſtory and polite letters, they imbibe no tincture; and the ſpirit, if not the precepts of their religion, ſet bounds to any liberal enquiries, by the deteſtation that they inſpire for heretics, and heretical productions. Women of faſhion rarely ſtir out in a morning, except to hear maſs, or on particular occaſions. They uſually take a cup of coffee or chocolate when they riſe; and they either remain afterwards inviſible in their own apartments, in a ſtate of the greateſt undreſs, or devote the hours before dinner to the occupation of the toilet. Few of them admit viſits from men at that time of the day, which is ſacred to indolence, affected to devotion, or reſerved for private concerns of a domeſtic nature. A morning at Vienna is ſhort, as the general hour of dining is ſtill half paſt two, and was formerly one o'clock; but it has gradually grown later for ſucceſſive years. Prince Kaunitz

Kaunitz forms the only exception. The afternoons of courſe are long; and it is accounted polite to viſit, wherever it is known that a numerous company is met, about half paſt four, juſt as they are riſing from table.

The evening may properly be ſaid to begin about eight, or earlier. Beſides the houſes of Prince Kaunitz and Coloredo, there are others, in which, during winter, aſſemblies are held once a week, or more frequently. Among the chief it would be unjuſt not not to mention that of the French Ambaſſador, the only member of the "Corps di-"plomatique," whoſe eſtabliſhment enables him to entertain in a ſtyle of magnificence. Ices and lemonades are offered to the company, but there is no ſupper except by particular invitation. Play is general: Ombre is among the reigning games; Loo, as well as Whiſt, very common: Taroc, Triſſette, Reverſé, and Tric Trac, much in vogue. Ladies who do not ſit down to cards, frequently have on their lap a little box of old Lac, and employ themſelves in untwiſting gold thread, which

which by no means prevents converſation, as it only occupies the fingers. The reſerve of the Auſtrian women, ſo unpleaſant on firſt acquaintance, inſenſibly wears off, and gives place to their natural character. Their converſation, if not improving, is rarely deficient in ſpirit, vivacity, and animation. But a learned woman is totally unknown at Vienna. I ought in juſtice likewiſe to ſay, that there are ſome pleaſing exceptions to the imputation of ignorance. No capital in Europe can produce perſons more diſtinguiſhed by natural and acquired endowments, or of minds more liberal and enlarged, than the Counteſs Thun and the Counteſs de Pergen: the houſes of both are the rendezvous of every thing that pretends to refinement, and form the beſt reſource for the Engliſh during their ſtay in this capital.

The women dreſs well, with great taſte, and greater magnificence. I never ſaw in any Court ſuch a profuſion of diamonds, unleſs, perhaps, at Liſbon; and they diſ-

poſe their jewels with no little elegance. During the carnival they endeavour to make amends for the privations impoſed by Lent, which extend not only to the table, but even to the toilet. They have, however, the abſurdity common in every kingdom of Europe except England, of dreſſing girls at ſeven and eight years old, like women of ſixteen or eighteen, with powder, a high head, a Chignon, and a hoop; which is in fact the ſecret of rendering them old before they are young. Vienna abounds with beautiful women; but they are not all natives of Auſtria, or even of Germany. Bohemia, Hungary, Italy, and Poland, of which laſt country a conſiderable part is now become ſubject to Maria Thereſa, conſpire to adorn the Imperial capital with their reſpective tribute of beauty. Every circle of the German Empire may claim its ſhare in compoſing the ſociety of this its common metropolis, as all the cities of Greece contributed towards the Venus of Apelles. The national, or provincial

vincial caſt of character is uſually preſerved, and eaſy to be diſtinguiſhed. The women of condition are noble in their deportment, and have an air of dignity. I think that in general their perſons are on a larger ſcale than with us, and that there are more fine, than pretty figures: their hair and teeth are commonly good, particularly the latter, to which the dryneſs of the air and climate contribute. If there be room for criticiſm, it is about the neck. Nature ſeems to have been laviſh of that attribute of beauty only in Italy and in Greece; while in other European countries ſhe diſpenſes it with a more ſparing hand: there are in Vienna itſelf many charming exceptions to the remark.

Rouge is univerſally worn by married and unmarried women of faſhion; but they uſe it in general with moderation as well as taſte: girls of fifteen wear it as much as perſons of thirty. The Archducheſſes alone are never rouged, the Empreſs not permitting them to be ſo on any occaſion what-

whatever. After the death of the late Emperor Francis in 1765, Rouge was abfolutely forbidden by Maria Therefa, on pain of her difpleafure; nor did any one dare to ufe it, even in private companies, on the moft felect parties. It muft be confeffed, that the authority is very unlimited, which can enforce fuch a prohibition throughout a whole capital, during a confiderable length of time. Peter the Great, defpotic as he was, found the obftacles infuperable in many inftances, when he attempted to regulate drefs and manners among his fubjects. Rouge revived gradually and imperceptibly, as the Emprefs's grief wore off, and her confequent repugnance to the demonftrations of joy or feftivity.

If it were poffible by feverity, as well as example, to banifh and eradicate gallantry from any city, it would have been totally extinguifhed at Vienna. The Emprefs, rigidly virtuous in her own conduct, faithful to the marriage bed, and never fufpected of female weaknefs, makes very little al-

lowance

lowance for the indiſcretions of others. She cruſhes every degree of libertiniſm beneath the weight of her diſpleaſure. A woman of condition, if known to be frail, unleſs her frailty be confined to one lover, and managed with the utmoſt attention to privacy and decorum, is certain to receive an order to quit Vienna: perhaps ſhe is obliged to languiſh out life in ſome obſcure provincial town of Hungary, Auſtria, or other parts of her Imperial Majeſty's dominions. It is hardly poſſible to conceive how minute and circumſtantial a detail her inquiries embrace, relative to the private conduct of her ſubjects of both ſexes: their actions, amuſements, and pleaſures, even the moſt concealed, are conſtantly reported to her. She employs emiſſaries or ſpies, who omit nothing for her information. I could relate from my own perſonal knowledge, ſome curious and entertaining inſtances of her inſpection into the conduct of the Ladies of her Court; but the ſubject is too delicate for particular details. An illiberal

ſuperſtition, rather than a rational diſapproval of gallantry, on account of the private and political ills which it produces, actuate her in this rigorous proſcription.

In no European capital are ſo much decency, caution, and reſpect for appearances maintained, in all connexions of pleaſure or attachment, as at Vienna. Theſe attentions are indiſpenſable, in order to avoid attracting the Imperial notice, always followed by reprehenſion or puniſhment. Gallantries here are covered with a myſterious veil, and aſſume the exterior of friendſhip. Unlike the fickle and libertine amours of Warſaw, or of Peterſburgh, they generally laſt for a quarter of a century, and are rarely broken off on either ſide. Slow in forming, they are ſtill more ſlow in diſſolving. I am inclined to believe, that beſides the reſtraints alluded to, neither the climate nor the air of Auſtria are favorable to violent paſſions of any kind. There is ſomething phlegmatic in the conſtitution of the inhabitants, phyſical and intellectual, which is adverſe to ſtrong

emotions.

emotions. The preſence of the Empreſs, and the terror inſpired by her vigilance, as well as her reſentment, operate in repreſſing all exceſſes. Superſtition, confeſſors, and penances, add weight to temporal motives. But the principle of frailty nevertheleſs exiſts: even Vienna has its Meſſalinas, though certainly in ſmaller number, and marked with fainter colours than elſewhere.

The ſuperſtition of an Auſtrian woman, however characteriſtic, habitual, and exceſſive, is by no means inconſiſtent or incompatible with gallantry: ſhe ſins, prays, confeſſes, and begins anew; but ſhe never omits her maſſes, not even for her lover. Few of them touch meat either on the Friday or Saturday of every week, or during the whole period of Lent, and they confeſs frequently; if not from principle, yet from habit or from fear. The marriage ring is ſeldom worn or kept, as its loſs would be ominous in their eſtimation, and preſage misfortune. In order to avoid ſo great a

calamity, they are generally ſent to a celebrated chapel of the Virgin at Maria Zell in Styria; a ſhrine where I am aſſured there are more gold rings, than Hannibal found on the field of Cannæ. Very little of the exterior of devotion is nevertheleſs viſible among women of condition: it interrupts no pleaſures of ſociety or converſation; it neither mixes with their diſcourſe, nor tinges their manners: they reſerve it for the altar, or the confeſſor. I ought likewiſe to add, that there are not a few, who entertain much more liberal and expanded ideas of the Deity and of Religion, than the Catholic Faith uſually inſpires, particularly at Vienna.

After conſidering the ſofter ſex, in ſpeaking of the men, it is juſt to make a leading diſtinction. The Auſtrian youth of rank or condition are in general inſupportable. Diſtinguiſhed only by pride, ignorance, and illiberality; regarding themſelves as ſuperior to every other European nation; altogether deſtitute of improvement, haughty

haughty and affuming; they want equally the inclination and the requifites to be agreeable in fociety. It is true, that like us, they commonly travel; that is, from Vienna to Paris, through Italy, and home. They imitate the French manners; but poffefs neither the urbanity, the vivacity, nor the elegant levity of France. Though coxcombs, they are not amufing ones, and in cultivation of mind they are totally deficient. The univerfities and feminaries of inftruction, throughout the Auftrian dominions, are fcarcely more calculated to form, or to enlarge the underftanding, than the nunneries where the other fex are educated. An ecclefiaftic is ufually felected for the purpofe, whofe cares are principally limited to the morals of his pupils. Temperate in their appetites and pleafures, they by no means merit the imputation affixed on the Germans, of a fondnefs for wine.

It is among men of riper years, in every department civil or military, that are found polifhed manners, urbanity, and attention

to ſtrangers. In ſolid endowments, in local information, and in all the branches of official knowledge which qualify for filling offices of ſtate or truſt with honour and ability; they may vie with the nobility of any country in Europe. But I am inclined to believe, that fewer perſons of extenſive reading and information are found among them, proportion obſerved, than in any of the German Courts. To the injudicious bigotry of the Empreſs, may chiefly be attributed the deficiency. It is hardly credible how many books and productions of every ſpecies, and in every language, are proſcribed by her. Not only Voltaire and Rouſſeau are included in the liſt, from the immoral tendency, or licentious nature of their writings; but many authors, whom we conſider as unexceptionable or harmleſs, experience a ſimilar treatment. A ſentence reflecting on the Catholic religion; a doubt thrown upon the ſanctity of ſome hermit or monk of the middle ages; any compoſition in which the pleaſures of love are warmly

depictured; for I by no means mean to ſpeak of thoſe licentious writings which it is the duty of every government to ſuppreſs; in a word, any thing where ſuperſtition is attacked or cenſured, however ſlightly, attracts immediate notice, and is inſtantly prohibited under ſevere penalties.

The far greater number of thoſe books which conſtitute the libraries of perſons diſtinguiſhed for taſte and refinement, not merely in France or England, but even in Rome or Florence, are rigorouſly condemned, and their entry is attended with no leſs difficulty than danger. It is indeed true, that notwithſtanding every prohibition, knowledge pierces, and gradually diffuſes itſelf over the Auſtrian dominions. But its progreſs is neceſſarily proportioned to the impediments in its way. On application to the literary inquiſitors or cenſors, who regulate this branch of internal police, almoſt any work may likewiſe be procured, though not without trouble, expence, and delay. Leipſic, Paris, or the Hague, to one or other of which places

places recourſe muſt uſually be had, are diſtant. The indolence natural to the human mind, frequently prevents ſuch an exertion, and extinguiſhes the feeble ſpark of deſire to receive improvement. The Auſtrian nobility of both ſexes, a few excepted, ſeem never to read; and appear equally deſtitute of an acquaintance with the polite, as with the abſtruſe branches of ſtudy or literature.

The Hungarians of diſtinction are commonly maſters of Latin, becauſe among them it is ſtill a living language, as all the proceedings of the Courts of Judicature, and even the public acts of Government, are kept in the language of antient Rome. But it tends very little to regulate their taſte, or to introduce them to a familiarity with the great writers of antiquity. It is not on the banks of the Danube that their works are juſtly appreciated. Horace, Salluſt, Virgil, and Tacitus, have here few readers, and fewer admirers. The hereditary ſuperſtition of Leopold and the Ferdinands, which

ſurvives

ſurvives in the preſent Empreſs, precludes their entrance and reception. It is probable that the death of Maria Thereſa, and the acceſſion of Joſeph the Second to the Hungarian and Bohemian Crowns, will produce a vaſt revolution in the human mind. His ſentiments on religious ſubjects are known to be more liberal; and they will, it is ſuppoſed, operate to thrown down the barriers, which for ages have prevented the diffuſion of improvement among the various claſſes of people.

Many of the great nobility here are extremely opulent, and maintain a ſplendor ſuited to their rank. They have uſually a palace in Vienna, and another in the ſuburbs, where they alternately reſide, according to the ſeaſon of the year. A piece of magnificence, peculiar I believe, to the Imperial Court, is that all the Miniſters employed in the principal offices or charges, are lodged at the expence of the Government, in houſes or apartments belonging to the Empreſs. That of Prince Kaunitz is very

very ſuperb. The range of rooms occupied by Prince Coloredo, as well as thoſe of Count Roſemberg the "Grand Chambellan," conſtitute part of the vaſt edifice of the Imperial palace. On the other hand it muſt be owned, that the appointments and ſalaries of the great officers of ſtate in every department, are, according to our ideas and modes of eſtimation, not merely narrow, but totally inadequate to ſuſtaining the dignity of their public ſituations. The Maſter of the Horſe has only four thouſand florins a year, which make ſcarcely four hundred pounds ſterling; the "Grand Chambellan" receives no more than twelve hundred florins. All the inferior "Chambellans," who amount to near fifteen hundred, have nothing whatever except the privilege of wearing at their pocket a gold key. Every other place in the gift of the Crown bears the ſame proportion.

The family of Lichtenſtein may be eſteemed one of the wealthieſt in Vienna. Prince Francis, who is the head of that houſe, poſſeſſes, I am aſſured, an annual income of

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at leaſt ſeventy thouſand pounds ſterling. It is nevertheleſs thought that Prince Eſterhazi, with a receipt of only fifty thouſand pounds a-year, is a richer man. The reaſon is, that the Lichtenſtein eſtates lie principally in Bohemia, Moravia, and Auſtrian Sileſia, where the taxes are very heavy and oppreſſive; whereas the lands of Prince Eſterhazi are ſituated almoſt excluſively in Hungary, where the power of the Crown is confined by charters, privileges, and compacts, which the Hungarians, though loyal, defend againſt all encroachment. When at his palace of Eſterhazi, about thirty miles from Vienna, where he reſides during a great part of the year, the Prince maintains an eſtabliſhment approaching to royal; and he is, I believe, the only ſubject in Europe, who keeps in pay a regular company of guards. In Vienna he lives with more privacy. Except Prince Kaunitz and Prince Coloredo, no perſon here ſits down regularly every day, to ſixteen or eighteen covers.

If London or Paris offer a more varied banquet of intellectual pleaſure and enjoyment,

ment, Vienna at leaſt abounds in every delicacy for the gratification of bodily appetite. The tables of the nobility are admirably ſerved, with great profuſion; Hungary, Moravia, and above all Bohemia, ſupplying every kind of luxury for the palate. The Bohemian partridges and pheaſants are infinitely ſuperior in flavour to thoſe of France or Italy. I dare not relate what I have heard of the quantities of game, large and ſmall, killed, or rather ſlaughtered in ſome of the ſhooting parties. Many hundred head of deer, hares, boar, and all kinds of wild fowl, are maſſacred by theſe relentleſs ſportſmen; who eſtimate the diverſion only by the multitudes which they deſtroy, and by the facility of the chace, if chace indeed it can properly be termed. The Danube, and the lakes of Hungary furniſh a variety of fiſh. Oyſters are even brought from the Adriatic, either from Trieſt, Fiume, or Venice, as are many kinds of ſea fiſh. Piedmont contributes the largeſt and the fineſt truffles that I ever taſted, which preſerve

ſerve all the delicacy of their original flavour, though tranſported acroſs the Alps. Prince Kaunitz is regularly ſupplied with them from Turin. In no article do they diſplay more magnificence than in their wines; and in many houſes, as Lady Wortley Montagu remarked ſixty years ago, the liſt of them printed, is put under every plate. I have now by me that of Prince Schwartzemberg, as well as that of Cardinal Migazzi, Archbiſhop of Vienna, and I ſhall copy the former, as a ſpecimen:

"Vin d'Abſynthe.
"Vin d'Autriche.
"Vin de Razerſdorf.
"Vin de Rhin.
"Vin de Moſelle.
"Vin de Nuitz.
"Vin de Champagne.
"Vin de Malaga.
"Vin de Bacaret.
"Vin d'Alicante.
"Vin de Balmſec.
"Vin de Ceriſes.
"Vin de Tokay."

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Notwithſtanding the number and delicacy of their wines, the Auſtrians, as I have already obſerved, are incredibly temperate and moderate in the uſe of them. I never ſaw a ſingle inſtance of a young man of faſhion intoxicated, during the whole time that I paſſed at Vienna. If they commit exceſſes, they certainly are not of drinking. I ſpeak however, only of the upper claſſes; the people are more addicted to the uſe and abuſe of ſtrong liquors.

Crimes, as well as puniſhments are rare, owing to the vigilance and ſeverity of the police. A murder is ſcarcely ever committed, and robberies are by no means common. At almoſt every hour of the day or night, a ſtranger may walk the ſtreets, or travel the public roads in ſafety. Of courſe, executions happen very ſeldom; but when they take place, they are conducted with admirable propriety and effect. I had the curioſity, for the firſt time in my life, to be preſent at an execution, only a few days ago; which from the circumſtances that attended it, well merits a particular deſcription. Many

thouſand ſpectators of all conditions were aſſembled to witneſs it; and I never ſaw any public ceremony performed with ſo much ſolemnity and awful decorum. Four men, convicted of robbery, aggravated by circumſtances of cruelty and inhumanity, were ſentenced to die; not by the halter, as with us, but by the ſword of the executioner. They ſuffered on the Eſplanade without one of the gates of Vienna, upon a circular ſpace or piece of ground walled in, raiſed twelve or fourteen feet above the level of the Eſplanade. In order to have a better view of it, I got into a cart placed near the ſcaffold, whence I could diſtinguiſh even the countenances and features of the criminals.

The firſt of the four malefactors having been ſeated in a chair ſcrewed down into the ground, his arms and body were next tied with cords, in order to prevent him from moving, and his neck was laid bare quite to the ſhoulders. A bandage being drawn acroſs his eyes, four Auguſtine

monks with a crucifix approached, and after prayer confeffed him. The executioner's affiftant then collecting his hair, pulled up his head with a view to afford a fairer mark. Meanwhile the executioner, who was a very decent man in his figure and drefs, arrived in a hackney-coach. When all the requifite preparations were made, he threw off his cloak, and being in his white waiftcoat, he unfheathed the inftrument of punifhment. It was a ftrait, two-edged fword, of an equal breadth quite to the point, prodigioufly heavy, broad, and fharp as a razor. Coming in flank of the criminal, who was blindfolded and ignorant of the precife moment, he took off the head at one ftroke, with a dexterity and celerity exceeding imagination. The affiftant held it up ftreaming with blood, and then laid it down on the ground; while the decapitated trunk was allowed to remain for fome feconds in the chair, the blood fpouting up at firft to the height of three or four feet in the air. Two men next untied the corpfe,

corpſe, and taking it by the legs and ſhoulders, bore it to a little diſtance. The head was carried with it, and the whole covered with a large mat.

Previous to beheading the ſecond culprit, the chair was wiped clean from the blood with which it had been ſtained; the ropes were waſhed, and ſand ſcattered over the place; ſo that when he was brought up to ſuffer, no trace of the preceding execution was viſible. About half an hour elapſed between their reſpective deaths; the laſt three being beheaded with the ſame dexterity as the firſt, and with ſimilar circumſtances. The velocity with which the ſword paſſed through the neck, and diſſevered the head was ſuch, that the blade ſcarcely appeared bloody. After inflicting each ſtroke, the executioner took out a white handkerchief, and carefully wiped away the globules of blood which ſtood upon the ſword; then ſheathed, and laid it down at ſome paces from the chair, concealed by a a cloak. The whole ceremony being ended, he

he advanced forward, and holding up the inſtrument of juſtice immediately after he had taken off the head of the laſt criminal, he addreſſed himſelf to the aſſembled multitude, demanding whether he had well performed his duty. They ſignified their approbation, and he then withdrew; while the people, before they diſperſed, joined with the monks in prayer for the ſouls of the departed. The four trunks and heads were expoſed during ſome hours on wheels, to the view of every one, and afterwards interred.

I retired from this ſcene, deeply impreſſed with ſo unuſual a ſight, which excites however, no ſenſation of horror, and is attended with nothing cruel or repugnant to humanity. On the contrary, human ingenuity and mercy could not perhaps deviſe a mode of taking away life, at once ſo lenient and ſo inſtantaneous. In fact it is the work of one ſecond only, and cannot poſſibly be phyſically felt by the perſon put to death. The mind, and not the body, feel the ſtroke,

whereas

whereas the halter does not always deprive of ſentiment, or extinguiſh being for many minutes. Decapitation likewiſe makes a far more awful and profound impreſſion on the multitude, who are affected by the ſight of the headleſs trunk, and view every part of the ceremony with other ſenſations than thoſe of an Engliſh mob, aſſembled to ſee men carried in a cart to be hanged at Tyburn. Here it excites all thoſe beneficial emotions which check the progreſs of crime, and retain ſociety within proper limits.

The rapidity with which the act itſelf is performed, conſtitutes not the leaſt wonderful part of it, and may be compared to the effect of lightning. No axe could inflict ſo ſure a ſtroke, however well directed by the moſt ſkilful hands. I have been aſſured by more than one perſon here, that the head frequently retains for three or four minutes, a ſtrong and viſible principle of life, after its ſeparation from the body; that the tongue and lips will even open and move. We read of Marſhal Biron's head making

a bound on the ſcaffold; a fact aſſerted by cotemporary and grave hiſtorians. I can ſay nothing poſitive on this point, from my own obſervation; but I apprehend that both the head and trunk are capable of ſtrong convulſive ſpaſms or movements, after their being diſſevered from each other; particularly where the perſon beheaded, is at the time in bodily health and vigor. The barbarous and abſurd cuſtom, common formerly at Vienna, Prague, and all over the German Empire, of catching a glaſs-full of the criminal's blood at the inſtant of his being beheaded, which was ſwallowed by perſons affected with epileptic diſorders, as a certain remedy; is now prohibited, or rather fallen into total contempt and diſuſe. Reaſon, aided by philoſophy, has extinguiſhed ſo abominable, as well as irrational a practice.

It is not merely over the perſonal ſafety and ſecurity of the Auſtrian capital, that the police undertakes to preſide. The morals no leſs than the conduct of all her ſubjects, form an object of the Empreſs's conſtant and unremitting

remitting attention. It approaches on many points to rigor, and may perhaps be juſtly thought unbecoming her dignity, as well as ineffectual to any ſalutary purpoſe. Women who are accuſed or convicted of devoting themſelves, however ſecretly, to the pleaſures of the public, are inſtantly taken up and confined. Many are annually tranſported down the Danube, into the Bannat of Temeſwaer; a marſhy and unwholeſome province, on the frontier of the Turkiſh dominions. It is ſaid that the city of Temeſwaer is peopled with ladies of eaſy virtue and procureſſes. I heard the Emperor give a moſt ludicrous deſcription of one of the latter ſort, very celebrated in her profeſſion, whom he had the curioſity to viſit in Sclavonia, to which remote country ſhe had been baniſhed by Maria Thereſa, for her conduct in Vienna.

Spies form a numerous, expenſive, and very obnoxious branch of the ſtate police. No place is free from their intruſion, or exempt from their enquiries. At the theatre,

at the Ridottos, and at all public entertainments, there are ſome of them poſted; not merely to protect the perſons or the property of the audience, but to prevent the ſmalleſt appearance of immodeſty or licentiouſneſs. Theſe commiſſaries report to the Empreſs every fact worthy her notice, and many which are by no means of a nature to deſerve her attention or interference. Such precautions would certainly be very laudable, if they were directed by a rational deſire of reſtraining debauchery, and moderating its pernicious conſequences. But it is only the progreſs of age and ſuperſtition which has gradually rendered her auſtere. She is actuated by the narrow bigotry of an abbeſs, not by the enlarged and enlightened principles of a ſovereign. Yet even her errors are reſpectable, ſince they originate in virtue, and her ſeverity unqueſtionably tends to reſtrain exceſſes of every nature.

The Auſtrians in general are much leſs free from prejudices, and more attached to ſuperſtitious forms or obſervances, not only than

than the French or Engliſh, but even than the Germans or Italians. Their habitual bigotry is marked in almoſt every act of ordinary life, or of common intercourſe and converſation. They reckon time, not as we do, from a certain day of one month, to a certain day of another: inſtead of ſaying, from the 19th of March to the 21ſt of June, they count from St. Joſeph to St. John: and in order to comprehend their meaning, it is neceſſary to become acquainted with their Saints, who occupy almoſt every day in the calendar. As a proof of the aſcendant which ſuperſtition had, and ſtill has over the inferior claſſes, it will ſuffice to mention a well-known fact. The Saints' days were become ſo numerous as to affect materially the tranſactions of commerce, and even the ordinary buſineſs of the capital. All the ſhops being ſhut on thoſe feſtivals, the tradeſman or the mechanic paſſed the whole of them in idleneſs, debauchery, or devotion.

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An evil of ſuch magnitude, which while it impoveriſhed the people, was productive of other pernicious conſequences, loudly demanded redreſs. The Empreſs applied therefore, to the late Pope, Ganganelli, for a diſpenſation from the obſervance of many of them. He readily granted it: a conſiderable number were eraſed; all further obſervance of them forbidden, and the people were commanded, on pain of puniſhment, to open their ſhops, as well as to purſue their reſpective occupations or trades. They did not venture openly to reſiſt a mandate of the Government, ſanctioned by a papal decree: but conceiving it to be no leſs impious, than contrary to the practice of their anceſtors; they contrived to elude and to render it fruitleſs, by refuſing to ſell any article, or by demanding an exorbitant price for it, upon the days when compelled to open their ſhops. It is only ſix years ſince the edict took place. Time has however inſenſibly mollified their intractability,

and

and rendered them more docile: but it will require a long period, to eradicate prejudices which have been imbibed and cheriſhed for ſucceſſive centuries.

Natural philoſophy has ſcarcely made greater progreſs in Vienna, than found reaſon and real religion. The doctrine of familiar ſpirits has its votaries and believers, even among perſons of the higheſt rank. Men are found, who profiting of the weakneſs and credulity common to human nature, profeſs to poſſeſs the ſecret of invoking, ſummoning, and commanding theſe inviſible agents. Princes, Miniſters, and General Officers of diſtinguiſhed reputation, are not aſhamed to liſten to their pretended diſcoveries, to be initiated into their myſteries, and to be preſent at their nocturnal meetings for the purpoſe of evoking or raiſing apparitions. Schrepfer would have found as many adherents, and made as many proſelytes here, as he did at Dreſden.

A fact not leſs incredible, is the eagerneſs and anxiety with which the philoſopher's ſtone

ſtone is at this very time ſought after here. I ſhould not venture to aſſert, if I did not know from indiſputable authority, that at leaſt three thouſand perſons are now occupied in the reſearch, within the city and ſuburbs of Vienna. Government gives the example, and holds out every neceſſary encouragement to ſuch as chuſe to engage in the attempt. In order to diſcourage individuals at the ſame time, from endeavouring to attain ſo ineſtimable a ſecret as the art of tranſmuting metals, it is forbidden to carry on chemical proceſſes or operations in private houſes. Any perſon detected in ſuch an occupation, may be ſeized by the officers of police, and all his apparatus confiſcated. But, if he ſhould be diſpoſed to engage in the undertaking, the Government will facilitate it, and furniſh him with the means. Profeſſor Jaquin is impowered by the Empreſs to receive propoſals from ſuch as are inclined to enter on the attempt to make gold; in other words, to find the philoſopher's ſtone. They are imme-

immediately provided by him with a room, charcoal, utenſils, crucibles, and every requiſite, at her Imperial Majeſty's expence.

The late Emperor Francis expended great ſums in this chimerical ſearch. A perſon of the higheſt rank here, himſelf an adept, aſſured me that not very many years ago, a man arrived at Vienna, who profeſſed to be in poſſeſſion of the ſecret of producing gold. Having made an offer of his ſervices to Francis, he accepted them; and with a view of concealing the tranſaction from the public eye, ſent him into Hungary, to an eſtate which he had there purchaſed, named Hollitſch. Two military officers, choſen for their ſuppoſed fidelity, accompanied the projector, with orders very narrowly to watch, and to report his conduct. Every thing neceſſary for carrying on ſo important a work, was liberally provided, and Francis promiſed him ample recompence, if he accompliſhed his promiſes. The man actually ſent ſome gold to the Emperor, atteſted to be of his own fabrication, but in ſmall

quantity.

quantity. After ſome time he ſuddenly diſappeared, and the two officers abſconded with him. The projector, who has eluded all enquiry, never was heard of ſince. But the officers, it is aſſerted, have been ſeen ſome time ago, one at Malta, the other at Hamburgh. Francis, inſtructed by experience, employed no more alchymiſts to make gold.

Numbers of the firſt perſons in Vienna have laboratories in their own houſes, where they are daily and conſtantly occupied in the ſame ſingular reſearch. Far from being undeceived, or diſguſted by ill ſucceſs, they perſevere, and expend no little money in the endeavour. Many times I have been in the laboratory of a great adept here, and have ſeen him employed in the proceſs itſelf. The room conveyed to me the preciſe idea of a Necromancer's ſtudy, as deſcribed in romances; the floor ſtrewed with crucibles, vials, and all the apparatus of alchymy. My attention was particularly attracted by ſeven lamps burn-

ing

ing under as many large glaſs bottles or receivers, each filled with a certain powder or dark matter: and he ſhewed me the particular one from which he flattered himſelf that ſucceſs might ultimately crown his labours. The utmoſt care is neceſſary to keep the lamps perpetually alive, like the ſacred fire in the Temple of Veſta, or among the diſciples of Zoroaſter. Strong charcoal fires are maintained for the purpoſe; the amuſement being by no means among the number of thoſe ſuited to perſons of a narrow fortune.

Some days ſince, finding myſelf alone with the nobleman in queſtion, who is one of the moſt pleaſing, amiable, and communicative men exiſting; I aſked him what were his notions and opinions relative to the object of his reſearch. I entreated him to inform me, whether it was merely as a recreation that he proſecuted it; or whether he ſeriouſly flattered himſelf with attaining in any degree the philoſopher's ſtone. "I "will anſwer you," ſaid he, "with frank-

" nefs and precifion: The fearch amufes
" me, awakens hope, animates my mind,
" and prefents objects, at leaft to the ima-
" gination, of the moft feducing kind. It
" is, I grant, expenfive, but I am well
" able to fupport fuch a demand upon my
" purfe. So much for the occupation
" confidered in itfelf. With refpect to the
" accomplifhment of the great object, the
" production of a powder with which gold
" may be made, I believe in the exiftence
" and poffibility of fuch a fubftance: it is
" called in the language of Alchymy, *Pow-*
" *der of Projection*. If I had an ounce of
" it, I could produce gold in the following
" manner: by applying to it a fmall quan-
" tity of gold, the metal is transformed
" into it; and gold only can produce this
" effect, or enable me to increafe, to any
" extent that I pleafe, the *Powder of Pro-*
" *jection*. If I afterwards apply a fmall
" quantity of it fo compofed, to any bafer
" metals, as lead, iron, or copper, I can
" change them into gold; fo that with a
" fmall

"ſmall proportion of gold, I can always have "powder ſufficient to produce an immenſe "quantity. By mixing certain ingre-"dients in it, I can deprive it of its virtue, "and revive it at pleaſure; but none ex-"cept myſelf, or an adept *of the ſame ſchool*, "can reſtore it when thus diſguiſed and "transformed. I believe that many per-"ſons have attained and practiſed the art "of making gold: nay, I believe that "there are ſuch perſons now exiſting in "Europe; but I am nevertheleſs very "doubtful of my own ſucceſs." It is unneceſſary to make any obſervations on the above account of the mode of attaining the philoſopher's ſtone; ſince a ſort of voluntary credulity ſeems to be the principal, and almoſt the only requiſite in the proceſs.

The memory of Paracelſus is held in high veneration at Vienna: he was one of the extraordinary men whom the Emperor Rodolph the Second, the great patron of philoſophers, chymiſts, and pretenders to ſcience, had aſſembled in his Court at

 Prague,

Prague, towards the beginning of the laſt century. Paracelſus boldly declared himſelf in poſſeſſion of the philoſopher's ſtone; and they ſtill ſhew a houſe here in the Leopoldſtadt ſuburb, where it is ſaid he changed a piece of braſs money into gold. Every body ſeems to be perſuaded of the fact; and as a confirmation of it, there is in the "Belvedere" palace, a picture which I have ſeen, that repreſents him in the act. I imagine however, that the evidence of the painting will not be admitted as incontrovertible.

If any degree of poſitive teſtimony could eſtabliſh the doctrine of tranſmuting metals, it may be obtained here. I have heard perſons named, who are either now alive, or lately dead, of whoſe faculty to make gold, nobody entertains a doubt. A Prince of the family of Lichtenſtein, is generally believed to have been maſter of the ſecret; by an improvement of which, it is pretended that he laid the foundation of the immenſe property enjoyed by his deſcendants: his

name

name was John Adam, and he was great uncle to Prince Francis, the preſent head of the family. I am aſſured that when he came to the ſucceſſion, his annual income did not exceed thirty thouſand florins, or a little more than three thouſand pounds ſterling. During his life he built ſeveral ſplendid palaces, either at Vienna, or on his eſtates; and his manner of living was magnificent in the extreme. Yet, notwithſtanding theſe expences, which were more than ſufficient to exhauſt his original patrimony, he left at his deceaſe lands to the value of above four hundred thouſand florins a year. Nay, they add that ſuch was his command of money, in conſequence of poſſeſſing the philoſopher's ſtone, as to compel the Court to interfere, and put a ſtop to his purchaſes, or he would have bought almoſt all Bohemia and Moravia.

The ſcience of making gold is not the only extraordinary object of reſearch, ardently purſued at Vienna: there are perſons here credulous or ſanguine enough to believe in

the exiſtence of drugs and potions, by which health, vigour, and even life, may be prolonged beyond their uſual limits. I have converſed with men who affect to have attained ſuch ſecrets; and the ſame nobleman whom I have already mentioned, preſented me not long ago a vial, containing a yellow liquid, which he aſſured me, taken from time to time in ſmall quantities, would tend to counteract the progreſs of age, or the effect of indiſpoſition. Unfortunately I want faith for the experiment, without which I imagine it would be of little benefit. You have probably heard of St. Germain, who is now alive at Hamburgh, and who pretends, that by means of chymical diſcoveries, he has already ſurmounted the deſtiny of man, and is above two hundred years of age. Impudent as the impoſture may be, and whatever ridicule it might excite in London, he would find believers here, even among the higher orders of ſociety. I ought however, in juſtice to ſay before I quit the ſubject, that

thoſe

those persons who are most warmly engaged either in the pursuit after the philosopher's stone, or any other visionary attempt connected with it, are still conscious of the ridicule that attaches to the thing itself. In order to avoid it, they usually either conceal their occupation, or affect to join in the laugh against themselves. The progress of reason and of true philosophy, can nevertheless alone put a total end to pursuits, so generally and so deeply imbibed.

The public diversions, and theatrical amusements of Vienna, do not correspond with the ideas which we are naturally led to entertain of the metropolis of the German Empire, the residence of the Cæsars. Few European capitals are more deficient in exhibitions of this nature. There is indeed, a company of French comedians who commonly repair here every winter; but they are so indifferent, as to render their performance scarcely supportable. It is otherwise at the German theatre,

where the reprefentation is excellent. Madame Sacco, who plays the firft tragic parts, may rank with the fineft actreffes of Germany, France, or England. Vienna has neither an Italian opera, nor "Ballet;" and during Lent no diverfions of a publick kind are permitted, except concerts. The mafked balls or Ridottos in Carnival, are held in the Imperial palace; where the apartments appropriated to them, are noble, fpacious, and convenient. I have frequently feen more than eighteen hundred perfons in the great ball room. The whole expence being defrayed by the Court, the profits arifing from it are appropriated of courfe to the Government. None of the public amufements are expenfive; the price of admiffion to the Ridottos is only two florins, or fcarcely an Englifh crown piece.

In Lent, it is pleafant on a holiday, to vifit "Heren-Haltz," a chapel fituated about half a mile to the fouth of Vienna. Devotion and amufement carry thither multitudes of every rank, and of both fexes. I

have

have met the Emperor himſelf on foot, among the crowd. It is equally curious and entertaining to mingle with the peaſants, of whom Sclavonians, Greeks, and Hungarians, compoſe a principal part. They walk, pray, take refreſhments, and return in the evening to Vienna. It is accounted a pious work, a ſort of pilgrimage, to viſit "Heren-Haltz" in Lent. People of condition either remain in their carriages, or walk, as they prefer; and I have ſeen ten or twelve thouſand perſons there of a Sunday, when the weather has been fine.

French may be denominated the common and univerſal language among perſons in upper life at Vienna. German is little uſed in mixed company; and the Auſtrians ſpeak ſo bad a dialect, that a native of Dreſden, or of Mentz, has no ſmall difficulty to converſe with them. Italian is generally underſtood, and many of the Milaneze, as well as Mantuan nobility, are to be found here every winter, whom buſineſs, pleaſure, or curioſity, attract to the ſeat of

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Government. Engliſh is extremely in vogue, particularly among the ladies, moſt of whom read and underſtand it: ſeveral ſpeak it with great eaſe and propriety. But French is indiſpenſable, and far more uſeful as well as neceſſary than German. It was otherwiſe formerly, under the reigns of Leopold and Charles the Sixth. Thoſe Princes, nurſed in hereditary antipathy to the Houſe of Bourbon, held in deteſtation every thing connected with France: language, dreſs, manners, all were odious. Italian then conſtituted the elegant and courtly vehicle of expreſſion. French was never pronounced at Court; and it would have been almoſt a crime to have come into the preſence of the Sovereign, in a ſuit of cloaths of the Pariſian mode. I have heard perſons who remember the times to which I allude, aſſert that any ſtranger who appeared in the drawing-room with white ſilk ſtockings, attracted attention; and that Charles the Sixth commonly ſaid of ſuch a one, looking at him with averſion, "That is a curſed

"French-

"Frenchman!" But the late Emperor Francis brought with him to Vienna the faſhions, language, and alliance of that country. As he never could ſpeak German perfectly, he always expreſſed himſelf in French. The Court ſoon followed the example: their animoſity to France was inſenſibly obliterated; and the connexions of marriage ſince formed with the various branches of the Bourbon Family, have almoſt completely done away the antient enmity between the two countries.

The climate of Vienna, as well as of Auſtria, though dry, keen, and ſalubrious, is conſidered as too ſharp and penetrating for perſons ſubject to diſorders of the lungs. Rain is not frequent. The winters are very rigorous; yet it is rather uncommon for the principal ſtream of the Danube to be frozen over from ſide to ſide. The circumſtance did not take place during the whole of laſt winter; but, about three weeks ago, it was completely frozen acroſs for a few days. I made an excurſion into Hungary, at that time; and I not

only croſſed the Danube on the ice oppoſite the city of Preſburg, where it is very broad, but I ſaw waggons heavily laden, which paſſed with perfect ſafety. In February and March, unlike our climate, the weather is generally very fine, nor are fogs common at any ſeaſon. During ſummer the heat is frequently oppreſſive, particularly within the walls of Vienna. A ſtill more diſagreeable attendant on warm weather is the duſt, uſually increaſed by the winds that blow with violence, which are accounted abſolutely neceſſary to preſerve the ſalubrity of the air. The duſt is indeed one of the greateſt inconveniencies to which the city is ſubject, no precautions being taken to diminiſh it; and even in February I have found it very unpleaſant. But, every advantage fairly balanced, the climate is far ſuperior to that of London, leſs inconſtant and rainy, exempt from the unwholeſome fogs ſo common on the banks of the Thames, and more favourable to the prolongation of health, beauty, and life. Here I ſhall cloſe this long letter.

LETTER XXX.

Reigns of Leopold, Joſeph the Firſt, and Charles the Sixth.—Acceſſion of Maria Thereſa.—Her harangue to the Hungarian Diet.—Coronation at Preſburg.—Her perſon, manners, and conjugal attachment.—Funeral vault of the Imperial Family.—Death of the Archducheſs Joſepha.—Allotment of the Empreſs's time.—Her devotion.—Audiences.—Prejudices and partialities.—Palace of Schonbrun.—Archducheſſes Maria, Elizabeth, and Chriſtina.—Anecdotes of the laſt mentioned Princeſs; her marriage, and aſcendancy over the Empreſs.—Character of Maria Thereſa.—Her virtues, talents, and adminiſtration.

VIENNA, *February* 11, 1779.

THE reign of the preſent Empreſs Queen comprizes a period the moſt intereſting of any in the annals of the Houſe of Auſtria, ſince the death of the Emperor Charles the Fifth. Its duration, which already

ready exceeds eight-and-thirty years; the critical circumſtances under which it commenced; the wars which, with various ſucceſs, have marked its progreſs; laſtly, the vaſt augmentation of her power and territory, by the partition of Poland, added to the recent ſeizure of Lower Bavaria: all theſe events conduce to render Maria Thereſa an object of peculiar attention, not only as a ſovereign, but as a woman. Her character, adminiſtration, policy, and actions, which have ſo eſſentially affected the felicity of Europe in the preſent age, will awaken the warmeſt curioſity, mixed with the livelieſt intereſt, to the lateſt poſterity.

Her grandfather Leopold, a Prince who experienced the greateſt reverſes and viciſſitudes of fortune, paſſed his long reign of near half a century, in a perpetual, but unequal conflict, with two powerful ſtates, Turkey and France. Driven from his capital in 1683, by the former Power, he owed his preſervation ſolely to the ſuccours brought him by John Sobieſki, who ſaved Vienna when reduced

duced to the laſt extremity, and prevented Auſtria from paſſing under the Ottoman yoke. It was not eaſy at that time to foreſee that Leopold, from a ſtate of ſuch depreſſion, would in the courſe of a few years become more formidable than ever. The arms of Prince Eugene recovered Hungary from the Turks; while the genius and fortune of the Duke of Marlborough, by the memorable victory at Blenheim, expelled the French from the heart of Germany, humbled Louis the Fourteenth, and elevated Leopold to the ſummit of human greatneſs. He expired almoſt immediately afterwards, leaving his Houſe in a ſtate of proſperity, to which he had neither contributed by his talents, by his courage, nor by his exertions of any kind.

Joſeph, who ſucceeded, was a Prince of very different, and much ſuperior endowments. Equally active in the field and in the cabinet, rapid no leſs than deciſive in his political character, he ſuſtained with ability the fabrick reared under his father.

But,

But, the term of his life was ſhort; and he was carried off by the ſmall-pox, after a reign of only ſix years, at the moſt critical period of the war, undertaken to fix the Crown of Spain on the head of his younger brother, Charles. His death produced the peace of Utrecht, eſtabliſhed Philip the Fifth on the Spaniſh Throne, and completely changed the deſtiny of Europe. The preſent Prince of Auerſperg, who is fourſcore, was a page in the ſervice of Joſeph, and aſſiſted about his perſon during that monarch's laſt illneſs. Converſing with him on the ſubject, a few days ſince, he aſſured me, that the phyſicians not only kept the Emperor in a room, from which all circulation or introduction of freſh air was entirely excluded; but, cauſed him to be wrapt in near twenty yards of Engliſh ſcarlet broad cloth, at the time when the ſmall-pox was at its height. Such was the practice of phyſic at Vienna, ſcarcely ſeventy years ago. Even now it is little better underſtood, either in Auſtria, or in Bavaria. Two ſucceſſive Empreſſes, and no leſs than ſix Archdukes

or

or Ducheſſes, have fallen victims to the ſame fatal malady within the laſt thirty or forty years.

The brother and ſucceſſor of Joſeph, Charles the Sixth, a Prince of very limited capacity, reſembled Leopold in the leading features of his character: yet, during more than twenty years of his reign, the Auſtrian dominions continued to increaſe. Naples, Sicily, the Milaneze, and the Low Countries together with the Kingdom of Servia, which province was wreſted from the Turkiſh Sultans, augmented his power. But, the evening of his life did not correſpond with the ſplendor of its meridian. Prince Eugene, who contributed ſo much to illuſtrate it by his victories, had the misfortune to ſurvive himſelf. Naples and Sicily were loſt on one hand; while on the other, the Turks, emboldened by the weakneſs of the Emperor's councils, recovered Belgrade, defeated the Imperial commanders, and ſeemed to be on the point of again over-running Hungary; as they had done under the Solymans and the Selims, in the preceding century,

tury. Under these humiliating and disastrous circumstances Charles expired; leaving behind him no male issue, a beaten and dispirited army, an empty exchequer, and a feeble guarantee purchased or extorted from foreign powers, as the best support to the tottering grandeur of his family, assailed by enemies on every side.

As the Emperor Joseph was destitute of sons, and the only hope of perpetuating the Austrian line, centred in the Archduke Charles; his marriage constituted an object of the first political importance. Among all the Princesses of Germany distinguished for beauty, who seemed to give the fairest promise of posterity, Elizabeth Christina, daughter of Louis, Duke of Brunswic Blankenberg, might justly claim the preference. She was selected for his bride; but, as Charles was then in Spain, contending for the Crown of that kingdom, the young Princess was sent thither, and the nuptials were solemnized in 1707, at Barcelona. When he quitted Spain, about four years afterwards, on the death of his brother

ther Joſeph, to repair to Germany; ſhe remained in Catalonia, till circumſtances enabled her to rejoin him at Vienna. Her perſonal attractions, which raiſed her to the Imperial Throne, had already ſuffered ſome diminution, before her firſt interview with the Archduke. I have heard the Counteſs Uhlfeldt ſay, who remembered her, that previous to her landing at Barcelona, ſhe was ſo ſtung by the Muſquetos, as to occaſion a violent ſwelling in her face. All her features being disfigured in conſequence; with a view to diminiſh ſo mortifying a circumſtance, a lotion was preſcribed, which produced indeed the effect of allaying the inflammation; but deſtroyed the exquiſite delicacy of her complexion, which ſhe never recovered to the end of her life.

The virtues of her mind and character ſecured however the eſteem, while they conciliated no leſs the affections of her huſband. She ſurvived him near ten years, and was a witneſs of the ſtorms which agitated the

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the commencement of her daughter's reign. Towards the latter part of her life, the late Empreſs was attacked with dropſical ſymptoms in her legs and extremities, which incapacitated her for walking. Whenever ſhe appeared in the drawing-room, it became neceſſary to place napkins under her feet, to receive the water that ran from them in great quantity. Maria Thereſa inherits, with many of her mother's amiable qualities, this corporal ailment, which ſeems to be conſtitutional, and naturally augments with age. After giving birth to various children of both ſexes, only two of whom ſurvived, in 1718 the late Empreſs brought into the world a ſon. His birth was celebrated with teſtimonies of univerſal joy, as an earneſt of the prolongation of the Auſtrian line. But, theſe premature hopes were almoſt as ſoon extinguiſhed, the young prince being carried off in the ſame year: an event which was occaſioned, if we may credit Lady Wortley Montagu, by imprudently weaning him. His deceaſe opened

opened the succession to his sister Maria Theresa, who, while yet in infancy, began to be considered as sole heiress to the vast dominions of the House of Austria.

She was born in May 1717, and might justly be regarded as one of the greatest alliances which had ever presented itself to ambition. Since Mary of Burgundy, who brought the seventeen provinces of the Low Countries in dowry to the Emperor Maximilian, none such had arisen in modern Europe. After long hesitation, Charles the Sixth selected for her husband Francis of Lorrain, Great Duke of Tuscany, a Prince whose similarity of age, added to his personal qualities and accomplishments, rendered him worthy of so distinguished a choice. He was not less acceptable to the young Archduchess than to her father; and the marriage was celebrated at Vienna with extraordinary magnificence, on the first of February 1736. The unfortunate war against the Turks, which covered with dishonour the last years of Charles's reign, followed shortly afterwards. It was

at this period of her life that Maria Therefa accompanied the Great Duke her hufband to Florence. She returned thence to Vienna, where fhe was prefent at the important moment of the Emperor's death, on the 20th of October, 1740.

Never did any Princefs afcend a Throne under circumftances of greater peril, or which demanded more fortitude, energy, and perfonal refolution. Surrounded with enemies, deftitute of allies, and attacked by the moft powerful adverfaries; it was long doubtful whether fhe would not be buried under the ruins of the Houfe of Auftria. While Frederic King of Pruffia unexpectedly marched into Silefia, the French and Bavarians appeared at the gates of Vienna. It is difficult to imagine a more interefting object, than the reprefentative and heirefs of fo many Emperors, contending for the vaft fucceffion devolved to her, and finding refources in the firmnefs of her own character. Even the circumftances of her fex, youth, beauty, and misfortunes,

fortunes, contributed to increaſe the general intereſt taken in her fate. Driven from her capital, ſhe retired into Hungary, where, from the loyalty of a martial and generous people, ſhe derived the moſt ſolid, as well as effectual ſupport. It was then ſhe made the celebrated harangue commemorated by Voltaire, which operated ſo powerfully on the hearts of her audience, and which is ſtill remembered here with enthuſiaſtic pleaſure.

I have converſed with many perſons of the higheſt quality, who were preſent on that occaſion: I never ſaw any who could mention it without emotion; and all agree in aſſerting, that the ſcene was the moſt touching to be conceived. It was not the cold diſcloſure of political or pecuniary embarraſſments, formally made by a Sovereign from the Throne, and followed by the demand of ſupplies for carrying on a war. It was the ſupplication of a young and beautiful woman in diſtreſs, who, as her laſt refuge, threw herſelf on the affections of a nation

that had experienced from her anceſtors, and even from her immediate predeceſſors, the ſevereſt treatment. Hungary, under Leopold and Joſeph, preſented a frightful picture of perpetual inſurrections, as perpetually repreſſed by executions, and by the utmoſt ſeverity of vindictive deſpotiſm. Count Koller, who is himſelf a Hungarian, and who then repreſented one of the firſt officers of State, has frequently related to me every circumſtance that attended Maria Thereſa's harangue. His own words will convey the moſt lively, as well as the moſt faithful picture of a ſcene, than which antiquity furniſhes nothing more ſublime and affecting. In the hands of Livy or of Tacitus, how beautiful would have been its effect, and how wide its operation, increaſed by the lapſe of time, which magnifies every object!

"While the Hungarian Diet," ſaid Count Koller, "which had been convoked "at Preſburg, was occupied in preparing "for the defence of the kingdom and of "the

"the young Queen, we received a meſ-
"ſage from her Majeſty, ſummoning us
"to attend her at the Caſtle. We imme-
"diately obeyed; and when we were met
"in the great hall, the Queen entered.
"She was in deep mourning, the year not
"being quite expired ſince the deceaſe of
"Charles the Sixth her father. A pro-
"found and awful ſilence of ſome mo-
"ments enſued; her Majeſty being in
"diſtreſs, which ſhe could not conceal,
"and which incapacitated her from utter-
"ing a ſingle word. During this time her
"infant ſon, the preſent Emperor, was
"brought in by the firſt Lady of the Bed-
"chamber, and laid on a cuſhion before
"her. With an action more eloquent
"than any oration, ſhe took him in her
"arms, held him up to the aſſembly, and
"while ſobs interrupted her voice, ſhe ad-
"dreſſed the Diet in Latin, as is cuſtomary;
"a language which ſhe ſpeaks, as well as
"underſtands perfectly. When ſhe came
"to the words, 'Agitur de Regno Hun-
"gariæ,

" gariæ, de perſona noſtra, prolibus noſtris, " et corona. Ab omnibus derelicti, unicé " ad inclytorum ſtatuum fidelitatem, arma, " et Hungarorum priſcam virtutem con-" fugimus *;' we all, as if animated by one " ſoul, drew our ſabres, exclaiming unani-" mouſly, ' Vitam et ſanguinem pro ma-" jeſtate veſtra †!' We wept, as did the " Queen, aloud; but they were tears of " affection and of indignation. In a few mi-" nutes afterwards we withdrew, in order " to purſue the meaſures neceſſary for ſe-" curing the Hungarian and Auſtrian do-" minions, at ſuch a moment of public dan-" ger and diſtreſs. The Emperor Francis " was not preſent; but he remained in a " room adjoining, from which he could " diſtinctly hear every thing that took " place. From the beginning to the cloſe, " this celebrated ſcene, which has furniſhed

* "The kingdom of Hungary, our perſon, our offspring, " and our crown, are at ſtake! Abandoned by all, we fly to " the fidelity, the arms, and the priſtine virtue of the famous " Hungarian States.

† "Our lives and our blood for your Majeſty!"

" ſo

" ſo much matter for hiſtory, hardly laſted
" more than twelve or fifteen minutes."

Maria Thereſa, it muſt be remembered, had previouſly gained the affections, and ſecured the allegiance of the Hungarian nation, by voluntarily ſubmitting to take the coronation oath of Andrew the Second, which ratified, in terms the moſt unlimited, all their privileges. After a conceſſion, at once ſo wiſe and ſo magnanimous, ſhe was ſolemnly crowned Queen of Hungary at Preſburg, in June 1741. I am aſſured by thoſe who witneſſed her coronation, that ſhe was then one of the moſt charming women in Europe; her figure elegant, her ſhape fine, and her demeanor majeſtic. Every portrait of her which I have ſeen, confirms the aſſertion. Though her eyes were of a light grey, they were very expreſſive and full of ſweetneſs. An air of delicacy, occaſioned by her having recently lain in, increaſed her natural attractions. When the Crown was placed upon her head, it proved to be ſo much too large, that it was found neceſſary to put cuſhions round her forehead, in order

order to prevent its falling down over her face. Its weight becoming inſupportable after ſome time, when ſhe ſat down to dinner in public, the Crown was taken off. The heat of the weather, and the length of the ceremony through which ſhe had paſſed, diffuſed a glow over her countenance that augmented her beauty; while her fine hair hung down over her ſhoulders in ringlets, and her whole figure was captivating to the greateſt degree. We muſt not forget theſe circumſtances, when we contemplate the enthuſiaſm of loyalty, with which ſhe found means to inſpire her ſubjects. It may be doubted whether Elizabeth ever awakened more among the Engliſh, at any period of her life or reign.

Maria Thereſa's perſon now retains no trace of the charms which ſhe once poſſeſſed; and it is difficult to conceive from her preſent appearance, that ſhe ever was handſome. So total a change ought not however, to ſurprize, when it is recollected that beſides her advanced time of life, and the number of children ſhe has brought

into the world, the ſmall-pox completed the ruin of her features. She caught the diſtemper from her daughter-in-law, the preſent Emperor's ſecond wife, twelve years ago, in 1767; and during her illneſs, her life was in the moſt imminent danger. Previous to that ſeizure, I am aſſured that ſhe ſtill might have been termed handſome, though ſhe was become large and heavy. In addition to the ravage made in her face by the ſmall-pox, an accident which happened after her recovery, totally altered her countenance, and obliterated whatever remained of her former ſelf. On a journey from Vienna to Preſburg, ſhe was overturned from an open carriage. In the fall ſhe bruiſed her noſe and face ſo violently, that the ſwelling and inflammation, occaſioned by it, threatened to deprive her of ſight. The care and ſkill of her medical attendants prevented that diſaſter; but the looſe gravel upon which ſhe fell, ſo diſfigured her features, that they are no longer recognizable.

The

The Empreſs Queen is now grown corpulent, unwieldy, and infirm. Her face, though lacerated by the marks of the ſmall-pox, and the effects of her fall, retains nevertheleſs ſuch an expreſſion of goodneſs and benevolence, that when ſhe ſmiles, her features for an inſtant almoſt become pleaſing. She owes no advantages to the decoration of the toilet, her hair being combed back very flat under her cap, on the crown of her head; and behind, it is cut ſhort on her neck. In order to conceal its being grey, ſhe always wears powder. Every thing about her perſon is dark and mournful; nor has ſhe ever, ſince the death of her huſband, the late Emperor, worn any dreſs except the deepeſt weeds. A black crape cap, which comes very low over her forehead, ſo as almoſt to conceal her hair, is little calculated to adorn, or to ſet off her face. On no occaſion whatever has ſhe put on diamonds, or other female ornaments, ſince ſhe became a widow. Her legs and feet, like thoſe of her mother, being grown feeble, and almoſt debilitated, ſhe

is

is no longer capable of taking any confiderable exercife on foot; and fhe ufually wears gaiters about her legs, on account of the fupport which they give her when walking. In the Drawing-room fhe ufes a glafs, in order to diftinguifh perfons at a few paces diftant from her. She is in fact very fhortfighted; or rather perhaps, age and infirmities having impaired her fenfe of feeing, oblige her to have recourfe to artificial affiftance.

When young, fhe was exceedingly fond of dancing, mafking, and every public diverfion: it is almoft unneceffary to fay, that fhe has long renounced all fuch amufements. I have frequently feen her fit down to cards in her drawing-room, on public days; and at the Court balls fhe ufually remains till about eleven o'clock at night, feated as a fpectatrefs of the dances: but fhe always retires before midnight; and in her own apartments fhe never plays at cards, or at any other game. In commemoration likewife of her widowed ftate, as a fort of aufterity which may mark her grief

for

for the loſs of a huſband whom ſhe tenderly loved, ſhe has never inhabited ſince his deceaſe, the principal range of apartments in the palace at Vienna. Thoſe in which ſhe lives, have a ſouthern expoſition; but ſhe is ſo little ſuſceptible of cold, that in the midſt of winter ſhe uſually has all the windows open during the day, and often cannot bear a fire in her chamber. The Emperor, on the contrary, is ſo chilly, that he ſays he is almoſt frozen when he goes to viſit his mother; and is obliged to put on a fur coat, in order to enable himſelf to ſupport, for any length of time, the air of her apartment. Her reſidence is on the third floor; and the rooms which ſhe occupies, though commodious and ſpacious, are nothing leſs then ſplendid.

Antiquity does not furniſh any model of conjugal affection and fidelity more perfect than the one exhibited by the Empreſs Queen. Like the elder Agrippina, ſhe preſſes to her heart the urn that contains the aſhes of her huſband; and time, which has ſoftened, cannot obliterate her grief. Francis died ſuddenly

on

on the 18th of Auguſt 1765, without previouſly confeſſing, or receiving abſolution. Unleſs prevented by indiſpoſition, Maria Thereſa never fails to repair on the eighteenth day of every month, very early in the morning, to the vault of the convent of the Capucins in Vienna, where his remains are depoſited. Even in winter, ſhe is there long before dawn, notwithſtanding the rigor of the ſeaſon and her many infirmities. The vault is lighted up, and on her knees ſhe pours out ſupplications for the repoſe of his ſoul. The whole month of Auguſt ſhe conſiders as a penitential time, dedicated to his memory; and ſhe generally paſſes it at the palace of Schonbrun, in a ſort of gloomy and devout retirement, amidſt maſſes, Requiems, and ſervices for the dead. However tinctured with human weakneſs and ſuperſtition, it is impoſſible not to reſpect the ſource, and to honor the principles, which inſpire ſo exemplary a conduct.

Having mentioned the vault of the Capucins, where the late Emperor is buried, it is indiſpenſable for many reaſons, that I

 ſhould

ſhould give an accurate idea of that funereal repoſitory. As if the Princes of the Houſe of Auſtria wiſhed to have mortality conſtantly before their eyes, and preſent to their imagination, it is ſituated near the Imperial Palace, almoſt in the centre of Vienna; under the church of the ſame name, which was finiſhed in 1622, by the Emperor Ferdinand the Second. I have viſited it twice ſince my arrival, not without ſenſations of a ſolemn and melancholy kind. The vault, or rather the ſubterranean chamber, is of conſiderable ſize; the light being admitted into it, though in moſt parts very imperfectly. All the Emperors, Empreſſes, and their male as well as female iſſue, for more than a century paſt, are ranged ſide by ſide. Among them I particularly remarked the monuments of Leopold, Joſeph the Firſt, and Charles the Sixth, which are magnificent. Near the laſt mentioned one, is buried the young Archduke, Maria Thereſa's brother, whom I have already mentioned, and whoſe premature death was a ſubject of general lament-

lamentation. The inſcription upon the tomb of Eleanor of Neubourg, third wife of the Emperor Leopold, which contraſts not a little with the panegyrics commonly inſcribed to ſovereigns, was dictated by herſelf. It is ſuch as a Carmelite, or a Magdalen, oppreſſed with a conſciouſneſs of her ſins, might have choſen to be engraved upon her tomb-ſtone; and I copied it for its humility, as well as for the religious caſt of expreſſion:

"Eleonore,
"Pauvre Pechereſſe!
"morte le 19 Janvier,
"1719."

She forbade any other commemoration or eulogium to be added.

The monument, erected to the late Emperor Francis and Maria Thereſa, is not compoſed of marble, but of a ſpecies of bronze or metal; having been conſtructed by the preſent Empreſs's directions, as long ago as the year 1743, when ſhe was not ſix-and-twenty. Here ſhe has deſtined her remains

to be depofited with thofe of her hufband, whenever Providence fhall call her hence; a period to which fhe has always looked forward without terror or repugnance. Unlike the generality of tombs, where the perfons whom they commemorate, are commonly laid recumbent, their hands joined in prayer; here the two figures of the Emperor and Emprefs are reprefented in a half repofing attitude. Francis, partly raifed on one fide, is regarding his wife with an expreffion of fondnefs, while the Genius of immortality crowns them with a wreath. Unfortunately, this monument, intended only to excite images of the moft folemn and melancholy kind; by fome perverfity of human nature, or by fome original vice of the defign, awakens ideas the moft remote from diffolution and mortality. The pofture of the Emperor, which, it muft be owned, is a little equivocal; the tendernefs difplayed in the looks of both the figures, added to the warm attachment which, it is well known, her Majefty always felt for Francis,

Francis, who was then young and handsome; these circumstances have given rise to many ludicrous or sarcastic remarks upon the tomb itself. Persons who are disposed to see the ridiculous, rather than the serious side of every object, have thought, not altogether without reason, that it bore more resemblance to a couch where the lovers are crowned by Hymen, than to the gloomy solemnity of a Mausoleum, destined to contain the ashes of the dead.

Round this singular monument, ranged in funeral pomp, repose the two wives of Joseph the Second, together with the various Archdukes and Duchesses, who have been successively carried off by death, during the course of the present reign. At a little distance, in an obscure recess, stands an altar and a crucifix, at the feet of which Maria Theresa, like another Penitent, is accustomed to implore the divine forgiveness for the offences of her husband and her ancestors. On the anniversaries of her father's and mother's decease, as well as on various others, she

rarely fails to descend into the vault, and to pass a considerable time in prayer. Not content with offering up her own supplications, she used frequently to compel her daughters to accompany her thither, and to join with her in religious exercises. Her injudicious piety was, it is too much to be feared, the cause of one of the most tragical events which has ever taken place among the individuals of the Imperial family: I mean, the death of the Archduchess Josepha. Her story, though short, will excite no less attention, than it awakens concern and compassion.

She was the sixth daughter of the Empress, born in March 1751. Nature had conferred on her a person uncommonly beautiful; and its effect was increased by the sweetness of her manners, which rendered her universally beloved. Her elder sister, the Archduchess Jane, had been demanded by the present King of Spain, Charles the Third, in marriage for his son Ferdinand the Fourth, King of the two

Sicilies,

Sicilies. That Princeſs having died, the Archducheſs Joſepha was therefore deſtined to ſupply her place, as future Queen of Naples. All the preparations for her journey were made; ſhe was publickly betrothed on the eighth of September 1767; and the day of her departure for the capital of her new dominions being fixed for the fifteenth of the following month, ſhe was already treated as a crowned head. But, Providence had decreed that the marriage ſhould never be accompliſhed, and that ſhe ſhould follow her ſiſter to the grave.

During the interval between her eſpouſals and the time for her quitting Vienna, her mother, anxious that the Princeſs ſhould perform her devotions for the laſt time among the tombs of her relations, before ſhe left Auſtria to go into Italy, inſiſted on her viſiting the vault in the convent of the Capucins. The young Queen expreſſed great repugnance to the melancholy ceremony, but the Empreſs perſiſted in obliging her to ſubmit to it. In vain the Princeſs

implored to be excuſed, alleging a terror and a dread that ſhe could not ſurmount: Maria Thereſa, inflexible, rejected all her entreaties. It is aſſerted that ſhe burſt into tears, when ſhe got into the coach that was to conduct her to the convent; and that while in the vault at prayer, ſhe was ſeized with a ſhivering. Whether there be any exaggeration in theſe circumſtances or not, it is certain that ſhe ſickened almoſt immediately on her return home to the palace. The ſmall-pox made its appearance ſoon afterwards; a diſorder which has been peculiarly fatal to the Auſtrian family; and notwithſtanding every medical aſſiſtance, ſhe expired on the fifteenth of October 1767, the preciſe day deſtined for her departure to Naples.

Many comments, as well as reflections, were made on ſo melancholy a cataſtrophe; and the Empreſs was univerſally cenſured for having compelled the reluctant Princeſs to viſit a vault full of dead bodies. But, another circumſtance increaſed the apprehenſion,

henſion, while it ſtrengthened the belief, that her death might be too juſtly attributed to that viſit. It was recollected that ſcarcely four months had elapſed, and thoſe the hotteſt of the whole year, ſince the Empreſs Maria Joſepha, ſecond wife of the preſent Emperor, had been buried in the ſame vault. The fact was well known, that the ſmall-pox of which the Empreſs died, was ſo extremely malignant, that it had been totally impoſſible to embalm her body. Many perſons did not heſitate to declare, that notwithſtanding all the precautions taken, the ſmell of her corpſe was perceptible, and even capable of communicating infection. In every caſe, the imprudence of the Empreſs Queen's conduct was incontrovertible. The Archducheſs's death filled the palace with conſternation, and the amiable qualities by which ſhe was diſtinguiſhed, added to the general affliction. Her brother, the preſent Emperor, who loved her with predilection, attended her during the whole progreſs of

her diſorder, and never quitted her till ſhe breathed her laſt in his arms.

The deceaſe of two Archducheſſes who were deſtined in turn to be Queens of Naples, together with the ſingular circumſtances attending the laſt, almoſt induced Maria Thereſa to think of declining ſo inauſpicious an alliance. It muſt be confeſſed that even in a leſs ſuperſtitious Court, ſuch events might be regarded as ominous or ſiniſter. After ſome irreſolution, it was nevertheleſs determined to name the next of the Archducheſſes in order of birth, Maria Caroline, to ſupply the vacant place. But, the young Princeſs, little more than fifteen years of age, terrified at the recent death of her two ſiſters, expreſſed the greateſt repugnance to eſpouſe a Prince, whoſe alliance ſeemed to be fatal to the Auſtrian family. The Empreſs her mother's firmneſs, ſuſtained by Prince Kaunitz's reaſons and exhortations, ſurmounted, however, her oppoſition. In March 1768 ſhe was ſent to Naples; the

firſt

firſt matrimonial pledge to the Houſe of Bourbon, on the part of Auſtria. Her ſiſter Maria Amelia, who eſpouſed the Duke of Parma in 1769, was the *ſecond.* The *third* and laſt was the Archducheſs Maria Antonietta, married to the preſent King of France in 1770. Three daughters, ſucceſſively conferred on three Princes of the family of Bourbon, may well be conſidered as a powerful cement between the two crowns and countries. It was in a peculiar manner the work of the preſent miniſter, and it is the one from which he claims the greateſt political merit.

I return from this digreſſion, to give you a detail of the Empreſs Queen's private life, the diſpoſition of her time, and her occupations. Pleaſures, in the common acceptation of the term, ſhe can ſcarcely be ſaid to have any. She riſes generally at a very early hour; during ſummer at five, and even in January, at ſix in the morning. After her private devotions ſhe hears a maſs, and proceeds immediately to diſpatch buſineſs.

Her

Her conſtant breakfaſt is milk-coffea. At noon ſhe hears a ſecond maſs, and then her dinner is ſerved, which by no means conſiſts of many diſhes. Parſimonious of her time, ſhe uſually dines alone, and inſtantly reſumes the conſideration of public affairs. During the ſummer, when ſhe is moſtly at the palace of Schonbrun in the vicinity of Vienna; if the weather permit, ſhe frequently paſſes ſeveral hours in a covered walk of the gardens, to which ſhe can repair from her own apartments. The walk is on a level with her chamber, in order to facilitate her paſſage to it. A centinel, ſtationed at the entrance, prevents all interruption; and the Empreſs has a little box, which is buckled round her waiſt, full of papers, letters, and memorials. She peruſes them all, remains four or five hours at a time in this employment, marks ſuch as appear to deſerve attention, and enters into the minuteſt detail upon every point. So wholly is ſhe occupied with concerns of ſtate, that it frequently happens, the Archducheſſes her daughters,

daughters, though they reſide in the ſame palace, cannot procure a moment's acceſs to her, from the hour of her getting up till evening. At ſix o'clock the Empreſs finiſhes her application to buſineſs, and hears Benediction; a ceremony of devotion at which ſhe expects her daughters to be preſent. If they abſent themſelves, ſhe does not fail to expreſs her diſapprobation. She even ſends to enquire if they are indiſpoſed; and ſometimes reprimands them with maternal authority, when ſhe meets them next day: but, ſince the death of the Archducheſs Joſepha, ſhe no longer permits them to accompany her in her viſits to the vault. Between eight and half paſt, ſhe commonly retires to bed. This is the exact relation of an ordinary day, as it is paſſed by Maria Thereſa.

For the purpoſe of her hearing maſs, as ſhe cannot walk to any diſtance, or move up and down ſtairs without difficulty on account of the debility of her legs, the floor of her bed-chamber opens. A chapel is prepared below, on the *ſecond* ſtory, and ſhe

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ſhe remains in her own room on the *third*, while maſs is performed beneath. I have been aſſured by ladies of the Court, who from their rank and functions could not miſtake, or be liable to ſpeak ignorantly, that ſhe is generally occupied more than five hours every day, in acts of religion and in prayer. Incredible as ſuch a fact may appear, it is indiſputably true; and her ſuperſtition naturally ſtrengthens with the progreſs of age. In March laſt year, I remember her being for three hours, from three o'clock till ſix in the afternoon, on her knees, in the cathedral of Vienna; imploring the divine interpoſition to turn aſide the war, with which ſhe was menaced on account of the Bavarian ſucceſſion. The Archducheſs Elizabeth aſſured a lady not long ſince, that "when ſhe accompanied her "mother to chapel, ſhe frequently remained "there for ſuch a length of time, as ſcarcely "to know at laſt what ſhe pronounced or "repeated." During Lent, the Empreſs practiſes all the rigor of Catholic mortification

cation and abſtinence. No Carmelite can be more ſtrict in the article of faſting, as well as in refraining from prohibited diſhes; and the Archducheſſes are compelled to obſerve the ſame renunciations. Even at the Emperor's table, I am aſſured that meat is rarely ſerved. In the holy week, the Empreſs hears ſeveral maſſes every morning, and paſſes half the day in exerciſes of devotion. It is to be regretted that her piety ſhould thus degenerate into ſuperſtition, and that the Sovereign ſhould be almoſt ſunk in the Devotee.

Notwithſtanding the time which ſhe ſacrifices at the altar, it muſt not however be imagined, that ſhe is inattentive to public affairs. On the contrary, as I have already ſtated, ſhe dedicates to them a great portion of every day. She regularly gives audience at ſtated hours; and on the Tueſday of every week, ſhe receives all her own miniſters in the various departments. Prince Kaunitz alone is admitted to her preſence on the ſhorteſt notice, on all days, and at every hour.

In

In compliance with the antient Etiquette of the Imperial Court, eſtabliſhed for centuries, all foreigners are preſented to her Majeſty quite alone, in her own apartments. With a view to obtain information, ſhe ſets apart particular hours, when the loweſt and meaneſt of her ſubjects are not only admitted to ſee her, but, permitted to ſpeak to her confidentially and freely. She frequently converſes with them, and when they have any thing to communicate to her of a nature peculiarly private, ſhe even allows them to whiſper in her ear. Very ſecret and curious facts reach her through theſe channels. Her women and female attendants have likewiſe audiences, when the Empreſs hears their reports of all that paſſes in Vienna. Unfortunately, ſhe is too much inclined to liſten to ſuch narratives, and to credit ſtories, often partial, miſtaken, or malignant. It is one of her prevailing weakneſſes to lend a too ready and credulous ear to the anecdotes thus brought her.

After

After reading the particulars here commemorated, it cannot excite ſurpriſe to find that Maria Thereſa nouriſhes many narrow and illiberal prejudices. Neither exempt from, nor ſuperior to the uncharitable notions, which bigotry neceſſarily inſpires, ſhe firmly believes every heretic excluded from the divine mercy; but of all heretics, ſhe conceives the Engliſh to be the moſt impenitent, hardened, and irreclaimable. I know that ſhe enjoined her youngeſt ſon, the Archduke Maximilian, when ſhe permitted him to viſit France and the Low Countries, on no conſideration whatever to paſs over into England. Her apprehenſion of his being corrupted by the contagious ſociety of London, and loſing all his religious principles or impreſſions, was the motive of this curious prohibition. She exacted a ſimilar promiſe from the Emperor himſelf, when he went to Paris, two years ago. "The Engliſh," ſaid ſhe to him, "are almoſt all Deiſts, Infidels, and "Free Thinkers. I tremble, leſt an inter-"courſe with ſuch a nation ſhould conta-

" minate your manners, and ſhake your
" belief in every thing ſacred among Ca-
" tholics."

Maria Thereſa, it is believed, entertains on the contrary, a degree of partiality for the French nation. The alliance, contracted between her and Louis the Fifteenth in 1756; joined to the marriage of her three daughters, particularly that of the youngeſt with the preſent King of France, have obliterated the ſentiments of enmity in which ſhe was educated, towards the French. It muſt likewiſe be remembered, that her huſband, the late Emperor Francis, was ſon of a French Princeſs, and himſelf warmly attached to that country. If the Empreſs has however, imbibed or adopted theſe predilections, neither her Courtiers nor her ſubjects at large participate in them. The inferior claſſes of people retain all their antient deteſtation for the French. It ſeems to be inſurmountable, and manifeſts itſelf on a thouſand occaſions.

Her Imperial Majeſty commonly paſſes the whole ſummer, and great part of the autumn,

autumn, at the palace of Schonbrun. She quits Vienna about the beginning of May, and returns to it again before the cloſe of October. In periods of public tranquillity, when her mind is unruffled and cheerful, ſhe is accuſtomed to viſit the palace of Laxembourg, which is about four leagues diſtant, and to paſs a month there: but during laſt ſummer, while her two ſons were abſent in Bohemia, and her armies contending in the field, ſhe remained altogether at Schonbrun, in gloomy dejection. The palace is ſituated ſcarcely more than half a mile beyond the ſuburbs, to the ſouth; Joſeph the Firſt, who began to build there, having only intended it for a little hunting-ſeat. His ſucceſſor, Charles the Sixth, conſtructed a larger edifice, which was further augmented and embelliſhed by the late Emperor Francis, who paſſionately liked the place, and expended conſiderable ſums in beautifying or adorning it. The Empreſs is not leſs attached to it; and as her huſband was, while living, inexpreſſibly dear to her,

 his

his partiality is probably not the leaſt of her motives for preferring it as a reſidence.

The word Schonbrun ſignifies "Belle "Source," and derives its name from a ſpring near the palace, in the gardens, the water of which is admirable. The Empreſs never drinks any other; and every day during the whole winter, while ſhe is in town, a mule comes from Schonbrun loaded with water for her table. No ſituation can be more deſtitute of natural advantages, a hill riſing before, and another behind, from each of which is beheld a charming proſpect; while on the contrary, nothing is to be ſeen from the palace, which ſtands in a valley. The gardens occupy a vaſt ſpace, ornamented with water-works, obeliſks, a Menagerie, and every embelliſhment of art: but they are damp, the cellars of the palace lying below the bed of the little river Wien, which runs in front. The edifice is large, the apartments ſplendid, and maintained at a great expence; Maria Thereſa laying out every year, many thouſand

thouſand florins in repairs or additions. But, as the preſent Emperor her ſon, makes no ſecret of his diſlike to the ſituation, which is too near the capital; it is not improbable that after her death Schonbrun will be abandoned, and perhaps converted by Joſeph the Second into barracks for the ſoldiery.

The fecundity of Maria Thereſa would not have been paſſed over in ſilence by Tacitus, in the delineation of her character and qualities. Thoſe who have beheld the late Emperor, his wife, and thirteen children of both ſexes, ſeated at table on publick occaſions, aſſure me that it was one of the moſt intereſting and pleaſing ſpectacles ever contemplated. Several of the Archducheſſes were highly favoured by nature. But, like the wife of Germanicus, Maria Thereſa, "infelici fecunditate fortunæ totiens obnoxia," has witneſſed the funerals of many of her children. I have already commemorated more than one inſtance. Of her numerous daughters, only two now remain alive unmarried. The firſt, Mary Anne,

Anne, eldeſt of all the Empreſs's iſſue, male or female, was born in 1738, two years before the deceaſe of Charles the Sixth. In her perſon ſhe is below the middle ſize, and a deformity in her configuration renders her lame; but I am told by perſons who know her intimately, that her mind is much cultivated and enlarged by reading. Though ſhe enjoys the revenues of an Abbey at Prague, of which ſhe is the titular Abbeſs; that eccleſiaſtical dignity neither compels her to reſidence, nor ſubjects her to any renunciations. Having paſſed her fortieth year, ſhe no longer mixes in the amuſements of the Court or capital, except on particular occaſions, when the Empreſs herſelf being preſent, ſhe accompanies her mother.

The Archducheſs Elizabeth is not yet ſix-and-thirty. Before ſhe caught the ſmall-pox, it is univerſally aſſerted that her features were charming, and her face beautiful; but if they were ſo, not a trace of it now remains. The two ſiſters have each a ſort of eſtabliſhment, conſiſting of a "Grand Maitre," and a "Grande Mai-

"tresse." In other respects, they lead a gloomy, tedious life; though the Archduchess Elizabeth has not yet renounced publick diversions, nor withdrawn herself from the amusements of the Carnival. Immured in the Imperial Palace, almost destitute of society, obliged to attend their mother wherever she moves, and compelled to assist at ceremonies or exercises of devotion, as if they were nuns rather than Princesses; scarcely are they known to exist by any of the foreign nations of Europe, and never were any persons less objects of envy.

The Archduchess Christina, more favoured by nature, as well as more fortunate, has at least emancipated herself from the confinement and subjection of her two sisters. She is unquestionably a very superior woman, and merits that I should enter minutely into her character, and the history of her life. Born in 1742, she has now passed the meridian of her beauty; but her person, in spite of a delicate constitution and very impaired health, still possesses

many charms. Her figure is of the middle ſize, well formed, and finely proportioned; her eyes full of vivacity, her features noble, as well as regular. Though naturally of a pale complexion, ſhe wears no rouge; a renunciation ſubmitted to, as may be preſumed, more from deference to the Empreſs's pleaſure, than from choice. Over all her limbs and motions is diffuſed an air of grandeur, which announces her high birth. Naturally diſtant and haughty, ſhe can nevertheleſs, when ſuch is her pleaſure, temper her demeanor with the moſt gracious and winning condeſcenſion. It is difficult to imagine a Princeſs more formed to repreſent the Majeſty of the Throne. Nor is it only her perſón to which nature has been liberal; ſhe poſſeſſes talents capable of producing very important conſequences, beneficial or injurious. Ambitious, enterprizing, and no way deficient in political courage, ſhe is not formed for the ſecluſion of private life, or for the uniform monotony of her mother's palace. Wherever ſhe appears, in Hungary, and in Italy,

Italy, no leſs than in Auſtria, her exertions leave behind them the traces of her active mind. Verſed in many of the ſofter accompliſhments of her ſex, ſhe dedicates her leiſure to the occupations of the pencil; and ſhe excels in painting, as various apartments in the caſtle of Preſburg ſufficiently teſtify; where I have ſeen portraits of her performance, executed in a maſterly manner.

With ſuch perſonal and intellectual endowments, it cannot, or it ought not to excite ſurpriſe, that ſhe has always been the favorite daughter of Maria Thereſa; and that ſhe poſſeſſes no inconſiderable aſcendancy over her mother's political, as well as private conduct. Perhaps, that very influence may likewiſe explain the cauſe of the Emperor her brother's, little attachment, not to ſay alienation, towards her. It is well known that he conſiders her as a powerful rival, capable of fruſtrating his views, and of impeding, if not totally overturning, his beſt matured plans of ambition or policy, by awakening the Empreſs's ſcruples, and touching

touching her maternal feelings. At every period of her life, the Archducheſs Chriſtina has acted a principal part in the diſſenſions, cabals, and private hiſtory of the Imperial Family. The intimate friend and confident of Joſeph's firſt wife, the Infanta Iſabella of Parma, ſhe approved herſelf not leſs the enemy of his ſecond, the unfortunate Bavarian. That Princeſs, it is aſſerted, experienced ſome mortifying effects of the Archducheſs's unkind offices, during the ſhort and melancholy period of her matrimonial union with the preſent Emperor.

Francis, her father, had intentions of giving her in marriage to his nephew, the Duke of Chablais, half brother to the reigning King of Sardinia; a Prince whoſe age, birth, and affinity to the late Emperor, rendered him a natural object of his ſelection. But, the young Archducheſs had already diſpoſed of her affections in another quarter, to a more fortunate ſuitor. Prince Albert of Saxony, fourth ſon of Auguſtus the Third, King of Poland, entered young into the

the Auſtrian ſervice: his perſon, if not handſome, was tall, manly, and well-made; his manners engaging, and his character every way unexceptionable. By his mother, the late Queen of Poland, who was daughter of Joſeph the Firſt, he deſcended from the Auſtrian line, and ſtood in a near degree of conſanguinity to Maria Thereſa herſelf. His elevated rank gave him frequent acceſs to the Archducheſſes, and facilitated the means of rendering himſelf peculiarly acceptable to them. But, a younger brother of the Saxon family, whoſe only fortune, independent of his military appointments, was a proviſion ariſing out of the Electoral revenues during life; however high his deſcent, or eſtimable his qualities, could not be conſidered as an equal, and ſtill leſs as an advantageous match, for a daughter of the firſt crowned heads in Europe. It is indeed generally ſuppoſed that the late Emperor would not have conſented to ſuch an alliance; and that if he had lived, the obſtacles to her marriage with Prince Albert never could have been ſurmounted.

In

" In the ſummer of the year 1765, when the Court of Vienna went into the Tyrol, the Archducheſs Chriſtina accompanied her father and mother. Francis was there met by the Duke of Chablais, and the propoſitions of his marriage were reſumed, notwithſtanding the repugnance manifeſted by the Princeſs. But, the Emperor's ſudden death at Inſpruck, in the month of Auguſt, put an end to the negociation; and ſo powerful were the Archducheſs's ſupplications with Maria Thereſa, that ſhe ſoon afterwards conſented to give her daughter's hand to Prince Albert. They were married within eight months of Francis's deceaſe, in April 1766, when ſhe had nearly completed her twenty-fourth, as he had his twenty-eighth year. A daughter whom ſhe brought him, lived only a very ſhort time; and it is ſaid that ſhe ſuffered ſo much in her lying-in, as to be incapable of bearing more children. Their union has been however, in all other reſpects, a happy one; and Prince Albert is ſcarcely leſs beloved by the Empreſs, than her own ſons.

Previous

Previous to the accomplifhment of their nuptials, fhe made over to her daughter and fon-in-law the Duchy of Tefchen, a fmall and mountainous portion of Auftrian Silefia, the revenues of which they enjoy during their joint lives. If they have no iffue, it will again revert, at their deceafe, to the Crown. Still further to enable them to fupport their dignity, the Duke of Saxe-Tefchen, (for fo he is denominated) has been created Captain-general and Governor of Hungary. In that quality, he and the Archduchefs occupy the caftle of Prefburg, where, during a part of the year, they refide and hold their Court. But, as Maria Therefa's attachment to them is too ftrong, not to be defirous of their fociety, they have apartments in the Imperial Palace, which they inhabit at pleafure. A fenfe of intereft, not lefs than of affection, may be fuppofed to influence them in the frequent vifits which they make to Vienna. The Emprefs is naturally bounteous; and it is believed that her favorite daughter has not been wanting to

improve

improve to her own advantage the moments of maternal tendernefs.

But, it is not at Vienna alone, that the Archduchefs's talents have found a theatre for their exertion. After emancipating herfelf from domeftic reftraint, fhe undertook to liberate her fifter the Queen of Naples, from political fetters. During a vifit which the Archduchefs Chriftina made, fome years fince, to the King and Queen of the Two Sicilies, fhe effected a complete change in the adminiftration of that country. The prefent King of Spain, at his departure for Madrid, in 1759, on the death of Ferdinand the Sixth, left his fon, a minor, as is well known, under the tuition of the Marquis Tanucci; who at the head of a council of regency, governed Naples, during many years. Things remained in the fame fituation, after the marriage of the young King, and his attainment to majority; no one being found who would venture to overturn the fyftem adopted, and the minifters placed by Charles the Third. But, the arrival of

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the Archducheſs Chriſtina at Naples, was the term of Tanucci's elevation. Encouraged by her exhortations, and directed by her counſels, the Queen her ſiſter induced the King to diſplace the firſt miniſter, to model the government anew, and under the name of Sambuca, to aſſume himſelf the efficient power.

The Emperor her brother has experienced not leſs the effects of the Archducheſs's interpoſition, during the progreſs of the laſt campaign, in a manner which muſt have occaſioned him the deepeſt mortification. No one here doubts, that the reſolution taken not to render Saxony the ſeat of war, as in ſound policy the Auſtrians ought to have done; was principally, if not wholly, due to her tears and entreaties, which the Empreſs could not behold unmoved. Perhaps, Joſeph may at ſome future day reſent and puniſh an interference, ſo incompatible with his objects of ambition. I know however, from inconteſtable authority, that Maria Thereſa has already not only promiſed, but, has ſettled beyond a poſſibility of its being overturned by

by her ſucceſſor, a future proviſion the moſt enviable for her daughter. Whether Prince Charles of Lorrain ſurvive the Empreſs or not, the Archducheſs and her huſband will be, on his deceaſe, conſtituted Governors of the Auſtrian Low Countries for life. It has been the conſtant object of their attention; and notwithſtanding the Emperor's reluctance, who is ſuppoſed to have intended that important charge for his brother Maximilian, he has been obliged to acquieſce in, and even to ratify his mother's determination. Whatever political change may take place after the acceſſion of Joſeph the Second; while his mother ſurvives, the Archducheſs will probably continue to act no unimportant part, in the ſecret councils of the Imperial Cabinet.

The character of Maria Thereſa appears to have partaken largely of the mutability connected with every thing human; and nothing can be more diſſimilar than the ſame woman in 1741, and in 1779. Many of the leading features of her mind have undergone ſince that period, as complete a tranſ-

formation

formation as thoſe of her perſon. Narrow prejudices and ſuperſtitious obſervances, obſcure in ſome meaſure the eminent qualities with which ſhe was endowed by Nature, which juſtly acquired her in the beginning of her reign, the admiration of all Europe. Perhaps however, we ought to pity and almoſt conceal defects, half apologized for by her ſex and age, nurſed by the bigotry of the people over whom ſhe reigns, and become hereditary in the Houſe of Auſtria. She retains, and I doubt not will ever continue to poſſeſs, many of the virtues and qualifications, which juſtly entitle her to rank among the beſt Princes who have ſwayed the ſceptre in modern times. As a woman, in every relation of private life, ſhe has not only been blameleſs, but meritorious. Her honor never ſuffered the ſlighteſt attaint, and ſhe was invariably, as well as tenderly attached to the late Emperor Francis. An affectionate mother, a generous miſtreſs, and a faithful friend, her heart has not been hardened or corrupted by the poſſeſſion of

 power.

power. It ſtill remains acceſſible to every gentle and benevolent impreſſion.

As little has age dried up or cloſed the channels of her liberality. She delights to give, to relieve diſtreſs, and to extend aſſiſtance to merit. At this very time, I know that the penſions and donations made from her privy purſe, do not fall ſhort of eighty thouſand pounds ſterling a-year. The indigent and the unfortunate of every deſcription, find in her bounty a certain reſource. Thoſe who judge ſeverely, incline to condemn her for too great a propenſity to munificence, and denominate it profuſion. That it acquires her the affection of her ſubjects, is however unqueſtionable. The ſoldiery idolize her, and would, I am perſuaded, manifeſt the warmeſt enthuſiaſm in her defence. As ſhe paſſes in her carriage, when at Schonbrun, ſhe frequently throws handfulls of ducats to the guard. That ſhe knows how to diſtinguiſh, and to patronize genius or talents in every branch, the names of Van Swieten, Metaſtaſio, Laudohn, Gluck, and many other

other eminent perſons who have riſen under her protection, will beſt evince. No princeſs was ever more open and gracious in her manners, more eaſy of acceſs, or more diſpoſed to redreſs the complaints of her people. They feel, but they pity and draw a veil over the weakneſſes of her character. Her long reign has neither been marked by oppreſſion, diſgraced by cruelty, nor ſtained by blood. The Hungarians, who under Leopold, Joſeph the Firſt, and even Charles the Sixth, were perpetually in arms againſt the Auſtrian Government, are become, under Maria Thereſa, the ſureſt ſupporters of the throne.

Her talents are confeſſedly good, and much above mediocrity. It is not ſaying enough, merely to aſſert that ſhe poſſeſſes more capacity than her father or her grandfather, who were both Princes of very moderate endowments. Her judgment is ſound, and ſhe is neither blindly led by her ſon, nor by her miniſters; though ſhe has ſuffered herſelf on various occaſions to be over-ruled by them, in contradiction to her own wiſhes

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and opinion. The prefent war may be cited as a proof of her deference to their advice; if, indeed, it may not rather be entirely and folely afcribed to the Emperor's ambition. Prince Kaunitz, though he has been near five-and-twenty years at the head of affairs, and though he defervedly enjoys all her confidence, by no means governs her, as Menzikoff governed Catharine the Firft of Ruffia, or as Biren tyrannized over the Emprefs Anne. She demands, it is true, his opinion upon every point, and frequently adopts it or conforms to it; but fhe determines for herfelf, and iffues her orders in confequence.

The Emperor himfelf, her fon, though poffeffing her warmeft affection, affociated to a participation in the Royal Authority, and declared Co-regent of Hungary, Bohemia, and all the Auftrian dominions, yet remains dependent on his mother. She preferves the fupreme direction, and is regarded as the only efficient Sovereign. Even in the military department, which fhe has in fome meafure refigned to him, it may be queftioned

queſtioned whether he can make any eſſen-tial changes or regulations, without her con-ſent and approbation. Conſcious of poſſeſſ-ing ability to govern, ſhe will never commit the felicity and protection of her people, to other hands than her own. If in the even-ing of her reign, ſhe is become enſlaved to a womaniſh ſuperſtition, this weakneſs is obliterated by her magnanimity of mind, by the wiſdom of her adminiſtration, by the proſperity that has attended her govern-ment, and by the beneficence of her cha-racter, which has rendered her no leſs dear to her ſubjects, than reſpected by foreign nations.

LETTER XXXI.

Character and anecdotes of the Emperor Francis. —Princeſs of Auerſberg.—Her beauty and accompliſhments.—Her death.—Particulars of the Emperor's death.

VIENNA, *February* 19, 1779.

IT is not a little curious to reflect that the Houſe of Auſtria, the German branch of which, during three centuries, from Frederic the Third to Charles the Sixth, uninterruptedly filled the Imperial Throne, is now ſunk in the family of Lorrain. But, as if the great qualities and virtues of Maria Thereſa ſupplied the defect in her ſex, Europe ſtill acknowledges in her perſon and deſcendants the Auſtrian line. The late Emperor Francis was grandſon to the celebrated Charles the Fifth, Duke of Lorrain, who lived an exile from his dominions, and who, when dying, left nothing to his children except his ſword. Leopold, his ſon, reſtored to his patrimonial inhe-

inheritance of Lorrain at the peace of Ryſwick, was one of the moſt excellent Princes who has appeared in modern times. The blood of Auſtria was mingled with that of Bourbon in the veins of Francis; Charles the Fifth, his grandfather, having married an Archducheſs, and Leopold having eſpouſed a daughter of Philip Duke of Orleans, brother of Louis the Fourteenth. At the extinction of the family of Medicis in 1737, when Lorrain was virtually incorporated with the French Monarchy, and Don Carlos made King of Naples, Francis was transferred to Tuſcany. It was then, as Voltaire juſtly obſerves, that the famous medal of Trajan, on the reverſe of which was inſcribed "Regna "aſſignata," might with propriety have been renewed. In 1745, after the death of the Emperor Charles the Seventh, the new Great Duke of Tuſcany was raiſed to the Imperial Dignity.

Francis in his perſon was very handſome, expert in all the exerciſes of the body, and uncommonly graceful on horſeback. His countenance was pleaſing, and its expreſſion benign

benign as well as conciliating. Towards the latter part of his life he grew corpulent, but without loſing his paſſion for the chace, which he always continued to purſue with ardor. An inconteſtable proof of his having been a very amiable man is, that, though a foreigner, his memory is univerſally cheriſhed at Vienna. Few princes have been more generally beloved; and among the number of perſons with whom I daily converſe, who remember him, I have never heard him mentioned, except with teſtimonies of affection and of regret. His qualities were, indeed, rather ſuch as ingratiate and attach, than of a nature to dazzle or impoſe. He poſſeſſed all the characteriſtic manners of the French nation, gallant, lively, polite, and ſuperficial. Fond of ſociety, of amuſement, of dreſs, and of magnificence, pleaſure accompanied him wherever he moved. Vienna, under him, was a far more elegant and luxurious capital than at preſent. An Italian opera, a Ballet conducted by Noverre, comedies, and maſquerades, in perpetual ſucceſſion,

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while they rendered it brilliant, attracted foreigners to the Court. Joſeph the Second by no means reſembles his father in a taſte for diſſipation, expence, and the ceremonial of ſtate.

The education of the late Emperor had been neglected to a degree, of which it is difficult to form an idea. So uninſtructed was he as hardly to be able to read, and his ordinary orthography would have diſgraced a ſchool-boy. This fact would be incredible, if I had not heard it from perſons who loved him, and who lived with him in the cloſeſt intimacy. "More than once," ſaid a lady to me, whom Francis diſtinguiſhed by his friendſhip, "I have ſpared his Imperial "Majeſty the humiliation of not being able "to make out a play-bill, and have read it to "him." He poſſeſſed neither a taſte for letters, nor an acquaintance with works of genius; but he had travelled, and when Duke of Lorrain, had made ſome ſtay in England, as well as at the Court of France. Having likewiſe reſided in Italy, and viſited various of the German Courts, he had acquired a degree of general

general information, from ſeeing ſo many countries. For chymical reſearches he had a decided paſſion, which he gratified by making various attempts to attain the art of tranſmuting metals, or in other words, the Philoſopher's Stone. His ill ſucceſs only induced him to turn his attention to branches of ſimilar purſuit, equally chimerical and impracticable. By means of large burning mirrors he endeavoured to diſſolve diamonds, and out of many ſmall, to form one large diamond; but he found that the proceſs only converted them into chryſtal, or totally deprived them of their luſtre by calcining them to a cinder.

Francis, though not diſtinguiſhed by the talents for war which his grandfather Charles the Fifth, Duke of Lorrain, poſſeſſed, was nevertheleſs perſonally brave. During the laſt years of the Emperor Charles the Sixth, he ſerved againſt the Turks in Sclavonia and Servia. He had likewiſe been placed at the head of the Auſtrian forces in 1741; but, during the whole courſe of the great "war of ſeven years," the Empreſs's attach-

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ment would not permit of her ſeparation from her huſband, or allow him to appear in the field. This conduct gave occaſion to many ſarcaſtic remarks, on the part of his Pruſſian Majeſty. Accuſtomed himſelf to brave every kind of danger, and a ſtranger to conjugal felicity, he treated with deriſion the inglorious retreat of Francis, in the arms of his wife. Maria Thereſa was not a little mortified, as well as irritated, by the reflections which Frederic publickly made on the nature of her affection, and on her reaſons for not expoſing him to the hazards and hardſhips of a German campaign. They ſerved to widen the breach between the two Courts, and to mix perſonal animoſity with political quarrels.

Neither the immenſe advantages derived by Francis from the Auſtrian alliance, which raiſed him to the Imperial Dignity; nor the preſence, rank, and character of a wife who poſſeſſed ſo many claims to his affection, could impoſe a reſtraint on his inclinations. Of a diſpoſition bold as well as enterprizing in purſuits of gallantry, it was ſaid to be dangerous for a woman of honor and beauty to

to remain alone in his company. He never failed, it is true, in every teſtimony of deference and reſpect towards the Empreſs, with whom he lived on terms of the moſt cordial union: a numerous and beautiful family cemented their mutual regard: but, Francis was not the leſs irregular in the gratification of his paſſions. Towards the concluſion of his life he became conſtant to one perſon, who maintained her aſcendancy over him to the laſt moment. I mean the Princeſs of Auerſberg, a woman too celebrated, as well as extraordinary, not to enter into ſome of the particulars of her hiſtory and character.

Maria Wilhelmina de Neuperg, daughter to the celebrated Marſhal Count Neuperg, ſo well known in the hiſtory of the reign of Charles the Sixth, and in the beginning of that of Maria Thereſa, was born on the 30th of April 1738. As her father was Governor of Luxembourg, ſhe, while very young, was often carried to Bruſſels and to Spa; where ſhe acquired, by the mixture of ſociety found in thoſe places, an eaſe and elegance

elegance of manners, which the more formal, or contracted ſtyle of female education in Auſtria, did not then commonly beſtow. When ſcarcely ſixteen, Marſhal Neuperg brought her to the Imperial Court, of which ſhe immediately became the wonder and the delight. I have been unanimouſly aſſured by all who knew her, that no deſcription can convey an adequate idea of her attractions. She was of the middle ſize, her complexion a clear brown, her eyes grey, her hair cheſnut, luxuriant, and gloſſy. But, her face and caſt of countenance were of that kind, to which no painter could ever do juſtice; becauſe, when ſhe converſed, a thouſand graces lighted up in it, and gave her an animation beyond the power of art to imitate or to convey.

So gentle and conciliating were her manners, that ſhe ſeemed incapable of offending or giving pain. Deſtitute of affectation, ſhe never laboured to pleaſe; for Nature had done all, and ſhe had only to appear, in order to be admired and beloved. Such was her ſuperiority of perſonal beauty, as

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to be out of the reach of competition; and ſuch the inſinuating ſweetneſs of her manners, as to be irreſiſtible. She excited love, without awakening envy or rivality in her own ſex; and ſhe made no enemies, becauſe ſhe never attempted raillery or ridicule. Her converſation was gay, eaſy, and amuſing; but ſhe neither poſſeſſed any uncommon natural endowments of mind, nor had ſhe a very cultivated underſtanding. Prodigal from temper, careleſs of money, and loving rather to enrich her relations than herſelf, ſhe knew no bounds to her profuſion. A paſſion for play, which ſhe indulged without reſtraint after her marriage, cauſed her to loſe immenſe ſums at the gaming table. Her heart, naturally generous and diſintereſted, was likewiſe tender and yielding. Fickle and capricious, ſhe ſeldom remained long conſtant in her preference: but, her very foibles had in them ſomething amiable; and it is ſaid to have been impoſſible to know her, without loving her.

So diſtinguiſhed a perſon could not long remain without offers and ſolicitations of the

the moſt flattering kind. Among her ſuitors ſhe reckoned the preſent Marſhal Lacy, as well as other noblemen of the greateſt rank and fortune. Having ſelected Prince Auerſberg, ſhe was married to him in April 1755, when ſhe had juſt completed her ſeventeenth year. The Prince her huſband, already a widower, was then about four-and-thirty. She brought him a fortune of full twelve thouſand pounds ſterling; a ſum immenſe at Vienna, where women of the higheſt quality have rarely above ſix or eight hundred pounds for their portion. But, ſuch was her rage for play, that in the courſe of the firſt ſummer after her marriage, while at the Prince her huſband's country ſeat, ſhe loſt this whole ſum at the gaming table, principally to her brother, Count Neuperg. She is ſaid to have loſt twelve thouſand ducats, or above five thouſand pounds ſterling, in the courſe of a ſingle evening, at cards; and her profuſion was ſimilar in other reſpects.

Only an Imperial lover, and one as generous as Francis, could ſuffice for ſuch de-

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mands. He found little difficulty in rendering himſelf acceptable to her, his rank, his aſſiduities, and his preſents, having removed the firſt obſtacles; but her inconſtancy excluded him from the ſole poſſeſſion of her heart. Francis was not the leſs permanently attached to her. In her ſociety, and that of a ſelect company of both ſexes, he uſed to paſs many of his evenings. A ſupper of ten or twelve covers was provided, where the Princeſs preſided, and at which all form or etiquette were baniſhed. In public, whether at the theatre, or elſewhere, Francis obſerved towards the Empreſs every mark of deference and attention; but, when ſhe was not preſent at the performance, he always repaired to the Princeſs's box. At the Opera he uſually ſtood behind her, concealed from view; and the box was locked, in order to prevent intruſion. Notwithſtanding theſe precautions, a cough to which he was ſubject, generally betrayed his retreat, and divulged the ſecret to the world.

When the Imperial Court went to Inſpruck, in the ſummer of the year 1765, the

the Princeſs of Auerſberg did not remain behind. But, with the deceaſe of the Emperor, which there took place, her conſideration likewiſe expired. It is a fact, that on the evening preceding his diſſolution, which was ſudden and unexpected, he had preſented her an order on his treaſurer, for no leſs a ſum than two hundred thouſand florins, or near twenty thouſand pounds. As he died the following day, which was Sunday, the interval was too ſhort, to allow her time for receiving the money. In a ſecret council, held after Francis's death, it was debated whether a pecuniary donation of ſuch a nature, to ſo great an amount, ſhould, or ought to be fulfilled. More than one voice declared againſt it; but Maria Thereſa, ſuperior to every conſideration except what ſhe thought her own and her huſband's honor demanded, iſſued orders punctually to diſcharge the ſum.

During the Emperor's life, ſhe had always treated the Princeſs with uncommon marks of diſtinction; a conduct only to be explained by her affection for him,

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which extended even to his weakneſſes, and reſpected his very faults. Such was her attachment to his memory, or the magnanimity and enlargement of her mind, that it is probable ſhe would have continued the ſame treatment after Francis was no more, if the Princeſs had not wantonly incenſed her, by a behaviour at once unbecoming and imprudent. The Empreſs's grief for the loſs of her huſband, was well known to be ſincere, as well as profound; and ſhe remained a long time ſhut up in the palace at Vienna, a prey to dejection, in the deepeſt retirement. When ſhe re-appeared in public, the ladies of the Court were permitted to wait on her, and to pay their compliments of condolence, with the expreſs prohibition of wearing Rouge. The Princeſs of Auerſberg alone, who ventured to diſobey the order, came to the palace in deep mourning, but moſt elegantly dreſſed, and with a profuſion of Rouge. Maria Thereſa did not conceal her reſentment at this conduct; and when the Princeſs approached to kiſs her hand, ſhe drew back with an air of indigna-

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tion and amazement that ſtruck every one preſent. So glaring a contempt of decorum on ſo melancholy an occaſion, and in ſuch a place, was never pardoned by the Empreſs, and juſtly merited reprehenſion.

She had previouſly given the Princeſs a convincing proof of her ſuperiority to little intereſts, and of her generous manner of acting in all pecuniary concerns. Francis, with a view of having the object of his attachment conſtantly near him, preſented her a ſmall farm-houſe near the palace of Laxembourg, where the Court uſually paſſed a conſiderable part of the ſummer. He did not venture to give her an apartment in the palace itſelf, as it would have been too obvious a mark of diſreſpect to the Empreſs. The Princeſs had expended a conſiderable ſum of money in furniſhing and embelliſhing this cottage, which ſhe had rendered very commodious. After the Emperor's deceaſe, Maria Thereſa cauſed it to be ſignified to her, that ſhe wiſhed to purchaſe it, and therefore deſired her to fix her own price on it; meaning to take

take away all future pretext for her being at Laxembourg, when the Court resided there. The Princess named thirty thousand florins, or near three thousand pounds, as the price of her cottage; a sum far exceeding its real value: but, the Empress sent it to her instantly, without deduction or hesitation. Even to the last moment, she observed the utmost civility towards her, and never behaved to her with harshness or insult.

The Princess of Auersberg survived her lover more than ten years, but never had any children. It seems uncertain what was the precise nature of the disorder which proved fatal to her, and many different accounts are related of it here. That she had a contraction in her limbs, for which frictions were prescribed, is undoubted; but, whether the use of them accelerated her end, as is pretended, I will not venture to say. Humbourg, a surgeon of reputation who practises at this time in Vienna, attended her. The frictions prescribed by him, being, as it would appear, too violent for her frame, not only caused her extreme pain,

pain, but produced a contraction in the parts where they were applied. I had the curiofity to inquire the circumftances of her illnefs and death, only a few days fince, of Brambilla, another very eminent practitioner, who was called in to her affiftance, at a late ftage of her diftemper. "When "I vifited the Princefs, fhe had already," faid he, "a contraction in one arm, leg, "and thigh, for which frictions were ad-"vifed. Having ufed them, they appeared "to fucceed; and fhe was fo much amended "in confequence, that fhe recovered in "fome meafure the power of moving her "limbs. We began to entertain fanguine "hopes of her recovery, when a violent "inflammation on her lungs rendered all "medical fkill vain, and put an end to her "life." Whatever was the caufe, fhe died at Vienna, fcarcely three years and a half ago, in October 1775, before fhe had attained to the age of eight-and-thirty.

It only remains to relate the particulars of the Emperor Francis's laft feizure and death. The marriage of the prefent Great

Duke of Tuſcany, Leopold, with the Infanta of Spain, Maria Louiſa, which was to be ſolemnized at Inſpruck, in the ſummer of the year 1765, carried the Imperial Court into the Tyrol. Joſeph, the preſent Emperor, then King of the Romans, as well as various of the Archdukes and Ducheſſes, accompanied their Majeſties thither. It is certain that Francis undertook the journey with repugnance, which he expreſſed to various perſons before he ſet out from Vienna. The Court remained for ſeveral weeks at Inſpruck, during which time the weather happened to be ſo conſtantly rainy, that the Emperor could not take his accuſtomed exerciſe of hunting. He ſeemed to be anxious and oppreſſed, without preciſely knowing the cauſe, or without any decided indiſpoſition. The Empreſs, ever attentive to the leaſt change in his health, would have perſuaded him to loſe ſome blood; but, as he had a diſlike to the operation, he always procraſtinated it; and, on her urging him to ſubmit, he refuſed, adding with ſome warmth, "Madame, voulez vous que

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"je meurs dans la ſaignée?" He ſtill continued uneaſy, ever wiſhing to be gone from the Tyrol, where a weight conſtantly hung upon his ſpirits; and in anſwer to thoſe who inquired of him how he found himſelf, he always replied, "Je me porterai bien, "quand une fois je ſerai à Vienne." More than once, looking round on the high mountains with which Inſpruck is inveſted, the air of which ſeemed to affect his reſpiration; he exclaimed, "Ah! ſi je pouvois "ſeulement ſortir de ces montagnes du "Tyrol!" All theſe facts evidently prove that Francis felt himſelf menaced with an apoplectic ſeizure, which the air in the vallies of the Tyrol probably accelerated, by its preſſure on the brain.

During the whole courſe of the day upon which he expired, he complained of a dizzineſs and ſuffocation that greatly incommoded him; but which, nevertheleſs, did not prevent him from appearing at the Opera. It was on Sunday, the 18th of Auguſt 1765. Previous to ſetting out, he

waited on the Empreſs to wiſh her a good night, according to his uſual cuſtom, as ſhe did not accompany him to the theatre; and after the performance, he was to have ſupped with the Princeſs of Auerſberg and a ſelect party, for which all the requiſite preparations were made. I have already mentioned elſewhere, that his nephew the Duke of Chablais, had repaired to Inſpruck by the Emperor's invitation, who had intentions of giving him the Archducheſs Chriſtina in marriage. During the progreſs of the Opera Francis found himſelf much indiſpoſed; and in order to diminiſh the difficulty of breathing, he took ſome drops, though without any conſiderable effect. The Princeſs of Auerſberg was in her private box, to which the Emperor was accuſtomed frequently to repair, when not accompanied by the Empreſs. But, the Duke of Chablais's preſence impoſing a reſtraint on him, prevented his gratifying that inclination. He contented himſelf, therefore, with making ſigns to the Princeſs, that he was unwell, by pointing

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to his head; and as ſhe was ſeated oppoſite, ſhe plainly perceived his indiſpoſition, which became more violent every minute.

Unwilling to quit the theatre, or to interrupt the performance, he remained nevertheleſs, ſome time longer, till finding himſelf menaced with a total loſs of ſenſe, he roſe up and went out, followed only by the Baron de Reiſchach and one or two other noblemen. When the Emperor came into the air, he ſeemed to ſtagger; but, on one of his attendant's aſking him if he was ill, he ſaid in German, "A man of ſpirit is not affected "by a ſmall matter." Theſe were the laſt words that he ever pronounced. He ſtill attempted to proceed, in hopes of reaching his own apartment, to attain which he was obliged to deſcend a flight of wooden ſteps. Coming to the top, his head grew ſo diſordered, that he laid hold on the centinel's arm who ſtood there on guard, with a view to prevent himſelf from falling; and as he tried to advance, at the ſecond or third ſtep he fell forwards. The perſons who were about him, inſtantly carried him to a little antichamber

tichamber adjoining, where they laid him on a common pallet bed, belonging to one of the lacqueys of the Court. While ſurgeons were ſent for, the King of the Romans was called out from the Opera. Hurrying to the room, he took his father in his arms, and manifeſted the moſt ſincere affliction. The Emperor's veins were cut, his temples ſcarified, and every method uſed to recover him, but in vain. He gave no ſign of ſenſe, and little of life, his tongue hanging out of his mouth. It was ſoon perceived that he was dead, and the phyſicians pronounced that all further efforts were to no purpoſe.

Meanwhile, as the intelligence ſpread through the palace, it became neceſſary to announce the event to the Empreſs. She received it with marks of the acuteſt diſtreſs, which were heightened by the apprehenſions that her deceaſed huſband had been taken away unprepared, in the midſt of his pleaſures, and before he had made his peace with Heaven by prayer or confeſſion. A council was inſtantly held, at which it was reſolved that her Majeſty ſhould quit

Infpruck as foon as the requifite preparations could be made for her departure. In order to avoid all fpectators, and as the moft private mode of conveyance, a boat was fitted up for her reception, into which fhe went on the enfuing day, only accompanied by her fon the prefent Emperor, Count Dietrichftein Mafter of the Horfe, and one Lady of the Bed-chamber. They defcended the river Inn to its confluence with the Danube, and thence down that ftream to Vienna.

Infpruck was prefently abandoned by all the Courtiers, and the roads in every direction were covered with horfes and carriages. In two or three days after the Emperor's death, hardly a perfon was to be feen in the ftreets of a place, which had been fo lately crowded with the firft Nobility of Auftria and of Italy. Every one, occupied with their own concerns, quitted the deceafed Prince. But, a circumftance almoft incredible, and which I fhould fcarcely venture to relate, if I had not received it from high authority, I muft fubjoin. Count Hatzfeldt, who

who is minifter of ftate for the interior, a nobleman equally refpectable for his talents and his public fervices; affured me himfelf, that he entered the chamber where his Imperial Majefty lay dead, in lefs than two hours after he expired. To the Count's aftonifhment, he found the corpfe ftretched on the wretched pallet bed, where they had placed him, abfolutely alone, not even an attendant near him; while two or three lingering drops of blood were ftill oozing from the orifice which the furgeons had opened. Perhaps however, this fact ought not to furprize: hiftory is full of fimilar examples.

LETTER XXXII.

State of the public mind at Vienna.—Arrival of the preliminaries of peace.—Satisfaction of the Court.—Entrance of the King of Pruſſia into Bohemia.—Diſguſt of the Auſtrian army to the continuance of the war.

VIENNA, *February* 25, 1779.

THE preſent month has been paſſed in perpetual viciſſitudes of fear and hope, as the proſpect of war or peace alternately aſſumed a more probable appearance. Even at preſent nothing deciſive is known, though every day and hour may unfold whether Germany is to be the theatre of another campaign, or whether the Houſe of Auſtria will make ſuch conceſſions of territory, as may ſatisfy the jealouſy of Frederic. In the laſt days of January, Mellendorf, one of the Pruſſian Generals, unexpectedly entered Bohemia, and advanced to the little town of Brix, which he pillaged. On his retreat

retreat towards the confines of Saxony, he was attacked by a body of Auſtrians, from whom he took two pieces of cannon and ſome priſoners, after which he continued his march out of Bohemia. Theſe partial incurſions increaſe the calamities, without deciding the fate, or accelerating the conclusion of the war. On the part of his Pruſſian Majeſty, they are probably intended only to keep alive the ardor of his troops, and to habituate them, after ſixteen years of repoſe, to the fatigues of a winter campaign. They may likewiſe conduce to obliterate the recent diſgrace of Habelſchwert, which had ſomewhat ſtained the luſtre of his arms, while it elevated proportionably the Auſtrian courage and reputation.

Juſt before the Carnival cloſed, which has been by no means cheerful, arrived on the thirteenth of this month a courier from Prince Repnin, the Ruſſian Miniſter at Breſlau. His diſpatches were addreſſed, not to any member of the adminiſtration here, but to the Baron de Breteuil, the French

French Embaſſador, who appears faintly to aſſume the ſame character of a mediator on the part of Auſtria, which Prince Repnin avowedly occupies for Pruſſia. It was inſtantly reported that the meſſenger brought the preliminaries of a general pacification; a piece of intelligence which excited the ſtrongeſt ſenſations throughout this capital. When the Baron de Breteuil arrived at Prince Kaunitz's with the news, though it was near eight o'clock in the evening, an hour at which the Empreſs is already preparing to go to reſt; the Prime Miniſter immediately repaired to the palace, to communicate to her the welcome information. We are ignorant of the particulars of their interview and converſation; but, no one doubts the joy of Maria Thereſa, at the proſpect of ſeeing a ſpeedy concluſion to the war. She no longer conceals her apprehenſions of its inglorious, if not injurious conſequences to the Houſe of Auſtria; and ſhe probably anticipates the neceſſity of reſtoring the portion of Bavaria occupied by her troops. In the bitterneſs of her

her emotions, ſome days ago, ſhe exclaimed, after peruſing a letter tranſmitted her by Prince Kaunitz, "I perceive that I have "neither an individual in the German Em-"pire, nor an ally in Europe, who will aid "my cauſe." Domeſtic vexations increaſe her political chagrin. Not only the Great Ducheſs of Tuſcany is at preſent confined by illneſs to her chamber; but, the Archduke Maximilian, the Empreſs's youngeſt ſon, one of the moſt amiable and worthy Princes in the world, has been obliged to have recourſe to the baths of Baden, four leagues diſtant from Vienna, for the recovery of his health. The fatigues of the campaign, on which he accompanied his brother the Emperor, are ſuppoſed to have been too ſevere for his ſtrength, and to have given a ſhock to his conſtitution.

Even Joſeph himſelf, if we may truſt to appearances, is heartily tired of his new profeſſion, and ſcarcely leſs deſirous of peace than his mother. He has found the ſcience of tactics, and the command of armies, more difficult than he had apprehended.

hended. Counteracted in the cabinet, and disliked in the camp; after a campaign no way fertile in laurels, he finds neither his fame, nor his popularity increased. He feels doubtless, likewise, that the general voice of Europe is against him; that the German Princes are preparing to check his ambitious enterprizes; and that the accession of territory acquired from the seizure of Lower Bavaria, even if retained, may be dearly purchased by incurring universal odium. His conduct, and every part of his behaviour, since the arrival of Prince Repnin's courier, manifest a satisfaction, which he has not attempted to disguise or conceal. After having been withdrawn during the whole Carnival, and rarely appearing either in public, or in company, he has at length shewn himself again to his subjects. On the three days that immediately followed the late news, his Imperial Majesty was present each evening at the Ridottos. With a smiling countenance he accosted every one whom he knew, entered familiarly into conversation, and seemed

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desirous to persuade all who saw him, that he sincerely participates in the wish for peace which animates the Empress, and pervades the Cabinet. The Carnival finished under these flattering symptoms of returning tranquillity.

So satisfactory were the articles brought from Breslau, as the basis of a definitive treaty, considered by the Court; and so thoroughly were the Ministers convinced of the probability of its speedy accomplishment, that they relaxed in many essential preparations for the approaching campaign. The war was generally regarded as at an end. The contract for mules was not only stopt, but, even the transportation of cannon from the arsenal was suspended. Vienna, during five or six days enjoyed a delusive calm, which was suddenly interrupted by a report, that Frederic having privately quitted Breslau, was arrived at Schweidnitz. Instantly all the public offices were in motion, and consternation succeeded to security. Not an instant was lost in sending off Generals Nostitz and Richecour to join the army in

Bohemia. Prince Charles Lichtenſtein's baggage followed, and every thing indicated immediate hoſtilities. The alarm was not by any means falſe or exaggerated; and the intelligence of the entrance of the King of Pruſſia in perſon into Bohemia, at the head of twelve thouſand troops, which arrived next day, ſufficiently proved that he did not truſt ſolely to the mediation of Catharine, however ſincere or efficacious, for producing peace.

An irruption ſo unexpected at this inclement ſeaſon, has rouſed the Imperial Cabinet from their ſecurity. They begin to perceive that the weight of near ſeventy years, added to numerous infirmities, have not yet ſubdued the ſpirit of Frederic, nor prevented him from leading his forces as in former wars. We know that he has already reached Braunau, while the Auſtrians, unprepared to oppoſe him, fall back in every direction. Vienna offers at this moment, a curious mixture of contradictory appearances, and contending emotions. The people, indignant at the idea of a peace which is about to be ſigned, at the time when a Pruſſian army is

is ravaging Bohemia, exclaim againſt ſuch humiliation, as no leſs degrading to the national character, than unbecoming the Majeſty of the Throne. The upper orders are divided in opinion; ſome loudly reprobating a continuation of the war, while others as warmly inſiſt on its vigorous proſecution. But, only one ſentiment pervades the military department; diſguſt and averſion to further hoſtilities. Actuated by theſe feelings, Marſhal Laudohn, to whom the Emperor, only two days ſince, offered the command of the forces in Bohemia, declined it, on pretence of indiſpoſition. His infirmities of body and mind incapacitated him, as he aſſured his Majeſty, for ſo important a ſtation. Joſeph, equally aſtoniſhed and chagrined at the refuſal, aſked him, whether he would not accompany him at leaſt into the field? Laudohn replied, that as to his perſon, it was abſolutely at his Majeſty's diſpoſal. He has not forgotten the affair of Munchengratz, where Joſeph, by his interference, ſnatched from him a certain victory over Prince

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Henry of Pruſſia, nor will he be eaſily induced to ſubject himſelf to a repetition of ſuch diſgrace.

Meanwhile the negotiations for peace are not diſcontinued, though the utmoſt uncertainty reſpecting their termination ſtill prevails here. The Pruſſians are ſaid to be retiring from Braunau and Trautenau; but, reports that they are aſſembling in the vicinity of Egra, on the weſtern frontier of Bohemia, have ſpread new alarm through this capital. A ſhort time muſt decide the queſtion of peace or war.

LETTER XXXIII.

Joseph the Second.—His Education.—Partiality of the Emperor and Empress for the Archduke Charles.—Marriage of Joseph with the Infanta of Parma.—Particulars of that Princess's Character, illness, and death.—Indecision of the Imperial Court on the choice of another Princess.—Second marriage of Joseph.—Qualities and death of the Empress Maria Josepha of Bavaria.—Attachments of the Emperor.—Manner of passing his time.—His person, manners, and accomplishments.—Indifference for the Arts.—Association to the royal authority.—Regulations and measures of Joseph.—Particulars of his private life and character.—Interview of Neiss.—Interview of Neustadt.—Anecdotes of Joseph.—His love of travel.—Activity.—Economy.—Courage.—Passion for war.—Ambition.

VIENNA, *March* 4th, 1779.

JOSEPH the Second was born on the 13th of March, 1741, at a most critical period of his mother's reign; a few months after the decease of her father, Charles

Charles the Sixth, when ſhe was reduced to fly from Vienna to the Hungarians, for ſhelter and protection. He was committed to the care of the Marſhal Prince Battiani, while ſtill a child; but at that time, and even long afterwards, he gave few or no indications of an active and ſuperior mind. Extreme timidity, accompanied with awkwardneſs and embarraſſment, characterized his manners. Reſerved in his deportment, and manifeſting neither military ardor, nor aptitude for buſineſs, he was conſidered as incapable of ever conducting publick affairs. So convinced was the Empreſs Queen of her eldeſt ſon's want of talents, that when alone with thoſe in whom ſhe repoſed a confidence, ſhe frequently complained of the unjuſt caprice of Fortune; who deſtined the Throne to a Prince deſtitute of ability, while a youth, adorned with every quality requiſite for governing mankind, was excluded from power. In making this remark, ſhe alluded to the Archduke Charles, her ſecond ſon, for whom ſhe had conceived the ſtrongeſt predilection. Equally prepoſſeſſed againſt

 Joſeph,

Joseph, she hardly enquired of the masters to whom his education was committed, what progress he made in his studies. It was not till after his brother's decease, that he began to be known and considered, either by his parents or by the Court.

Towards the conclusion of the late war, in 1761, when about twenty years old, Joseph made an attempt to emancipate and distinguish himself, by demanding permission to serve against the Prussians. But, this first display of energy was over-ruled, and his request rejected; not so much from any apprehensions relative to his personal safety, as from a wish to repress, and to retain him still in obscurity. Though Francis, no less than the Empress, treated him with such severity, Joseph submitted in silence; uttered no complaint, concealed his very wishes, and endeavoured carefully to avoid any subject of competition which might awaken his father's jealousy. But, Marshal Battiani, his Governor, who knew him well, and who had studied his character, made no scruple of declaring to his own particular

particular friends, that "the Archduke "was not what he feemed; that thofe "who judged of him by appearances, would "be ultimately miftaken; and that his real "difpofition as well as capacity, never would "be unfolded to the world, till after the "Emperor's death." Time has already proved the truth of this prediction.

It is inconteftable that Francis, throughout the whole courfe of his life, did not manifeft any warm attachment for his eldeft fon. All his partiality, like Maria Therefa's, was referved for the Archduke Charles; a Prince, who is univerfally allowed to have poffeffed very extraordinary endowments. He was born in February 1745, and expired at Vienna in 1761, when he had fcarcely completed his fixteenth year. While children, his elder brother Jofeph and he never lived in amity, and as they advanced towards manhood, the alienation between them, fomented by many caufes, naturally increafed. Charles, if incenfed, did not fcruple fometimes to fay, that "he had the advantage in birth, "Jofeph

"Joseph being only son to the *Great Duke* "*of Tuscany*, while he himself was the son "of *the Emperor*." The assertion was nevertheless, not quite accurate, since Francis was only elected to the Imperial dignity, and crowned at Francfort, in September 1745, seven months subsequent to the Archduke Charles's birth.

By the concurring testimony of all who remember him, he appears to have been a youth of uncommon, and almost premature talents; bold, lively, and enterprizing beyond his years. But his temper was irascible, and his disposition mischievous, as well as intractable. Such an union of ability and of violence, fanned by parental partiality, might, it was apprehended, have produced unpleasant, if not dangerous consequences, from the animosity between him and his brother Joseph, if Charles had attained to riper years. He was himself so sensible of the disturbances likely to arise in the Imperial Family from this cause, that in his last hours he avowed it to the Empress his mother. When he lay dying, and she

sat

ſat by him on the bed, diſſolved in tears, he ſaid to her, taking her hand in his, "Madam, do not lament ſo bitterly my "approaching end; for had I lived, I "ſhould have given you much greater "cauſe of ſorrow." He expired a few hours afterwards, meeting the approaches of death with the utmoſt firmneſs and courage.

Some months previous to this event, the Archduke Joſeph, then in his twentieth year, was married in October, 1760, to Elizabeth Maria, Infanta of Parma. She was daughter of Don Philip, Duke of Parma; and as her mother, a Princeſs of France, was the eldeſt of Louis the Fifteenth's children, ſhe conſequently deſcended on both ſides from the Houſe of Bourbon. Her father, Don Philip, one of the moſt amiable Princes of our time, is ſaid to have periſhed by a death equally tragical and ſingular. I have been aſſured from high authority, that while hunting in the woods of Colorno, near Parma, in July 1765, he was miſſed by his attendants, and

and that when they found him, he was already half devoured by his own hounds; only ſome mutilated remains of his body being diſcovered. It is ſuppoſed that having been thrown from his horſe, the dogs might have taſted of his blood, and fallen upon him, as he lay ſtunned or inſenſible on the ground. I am nevertheleſs far from venturing to guarantee a ſtory, which ſeems to partake too much of the marvellous eaſily to challenge belief, and which is denied at Parma, where Don Philip's death is attributed to the ſmall-pox. His daughter's hiſtory contains however, circumſtances ſcarcely leſs extraordinary, which ſtand upon ſuch teſtimony as it is difficult to contravert, or to call in queſtion.

Elizabeth Maria of Parma, who was born in the ſame year with her huſband, the Archduke Joſeph, though agreeable in her perſon, poſſeſſed no pretenſions to be termed beautiful. She had the deep complexion of a Spaniard, which was contraſted to her diſadvantage at Vienna, by a compariſon with the fair and delicate ſkins of

the Archducheſſes her ſiſters-in-law, ſome of whom might then rank with the moſt lovely young women in Europe. Her mouth was pretty, her teeth fine, and her eyes animated; but, when ſilent or thoughtful, her countenance loſt all its attractions. I have ſeen many portraits of her, in particular two, which are at the Caſtle of Preſburg in Hungary, both of them painted by the Archducheſs Chriſtina, and probably flattering reſemblances. They exactly correſpond to the foregoing deſcription, and convey the idea of a dark Spaniſh woman, with a long contour of face, and black ſparkling eyes.

Her underſtanding was cultivated, and her mind highly accompliſhed. She painted, performed on many inſtruments of muſic, particularly on the violin, in a maſterly manner; and her active temper impelled her continually to ſome new purſuit or employment. Above all, ſhe poſſeſſed the talent of intereſting and amuſing the Archduke her huſband, when alone. But, her talents and accompliſhments were alike obſcured

ſcured by a Melancholy, which, whether purely conſtitutional, or the reſult of other cauſes, became ſo habitual and inveterate, as to ſwallow up all the other features of her character. No pleaſures, and no endeavours on the part of thoſe about her, could ever ſurmount this gloom, which, far from diminiſhing, appeared to acquire force from time. In every part of her ſtory there is ſomething enigmatical and myſterious, not eaſy to penetrate, which powerfully intereſts, while it awakens curioſity.

I have been aſſured that when the noblemen, commiſſioned by the Court of Vienna to demand her in marriage for the Archduke Joſeph, arrived at Parma, and were preſented to her, ſhe addreſſed herſelf to them with great earneſtneſs: " I am," ſaid ſhe, " exceedingly flattered by ſo diſ-" tinguiſhed a preference over the other " Princeſſes of Europe, as their Imperial " Majeſties have ſhewn, in chuſing me " for the wife of their eldeſt ſon; an alli-" ance as much above my merits, as be-" yond my expectations. I have only to " regret,

"regret, that the trouble which they have "given themſelves will be entirely ineffec- "tual, ſince I am well convinced that I ſhall "not live long enough to anſwer the views "deſigned by my marriage." Whether this ſtory be literally true or not, there is no doubt that from the day of her quitting Parma, to that of her death, ſhe conſtantly perſevered in believing and aſſerting that her life would be ſhort. Piety, as well as love, were ſuppoſed to be the cauſes of ſo extraordinary a perſuaſion. Her diſpoſition, naturally penſive and religious, was capable of deep impreſſions, and of ſtrong attachments. A report prevailed, to which ſome degree of probability is due, that ſhe had diſpoſed of her heart and affections, before ſhe quitted Italy. It is certain that ſhe expreſſed her wiſhes to have been permitted to take the veil, and to retire into a nunnery; a requeſt which added force to the former ſuſpicion.

On her firſt arrival at Vienna, ſhe was received by the Emperor and Empreſs, with every demonſtration of joy and pleaſure. The

The marriage was solemnized, and she soon acquired an interest in the affections of the Archduke her husband, of which he gave her the strongest proofs. Whenever she went to the theatre, or elsewhere in public, he rarely failed to accompany her, carried her cloak on his arm, and manifested in all his actions the part which he took in her felicity. This conduct excited the greater surprize, as he had universally been accused of insensibility towards women; and those who thought they knew his character best, pronounced him incapable, or unfit for a state of matrimonial happiness. She behaved on her part towards him with great external attention, though it is supposed that her heart remained untouched and unaffected by the testimonies of his passion. While in publick, or in society, she endeavoured to assume a degree of cheerfulness; but no sooner was she retired to her own apartment, than she sunk into melancholy and dejection. Her favorite topick of meditation and conversation, was death. She anxiously seized every occasion of being

alone,

alone, and of indulging without restraint her reflexions on this ſubject.

The Archducheſs's pregnancy, which took place in 1761, was a natural ſubject of joy to the Imperial Family. She lay in of a daughter, who was named Thereſa after the Empreſs Queen, and of whom ſhe herſelf was paſſionately fond. But, neither the feelings of a mother, the attachment of her huſband, nor the proſpect of her own elevation to the higheſt dignity of the German Empire, could diſſipate her habitual melancholy. With unconcern and indifference, ſhe heard of the meaſures taken to ſecure the Archduke Joſeph's election as King of the Romans; and ſhe ſeemed to feel no intereſt in his approaching coronation at Francfort. "Theſe things," ſaid ſhe frequently, "regard not me. I ſhall "never live to be Queen of the Romans." Far from concealing her opinion on a point ſo delicate, ſhe made no ſcruple of declaring it to the Empreſs, to her ſiſters-in-law the Archducheſſes, and to the Ladies in attendance about her perſon. However

 ſtrange

ſtrange or incredible the fact may appear, it is incontrovertible. Many women of the higheſt rank and moſt unimpeached veracity in Vienna, aſſure me that they have heard the Archducheſs frequently predict her own diſſolution as imminent. The Empreſs Queen herſelf made no ſecret of it at the time, and has confirmed the truth of the anecdote within theſe few months paſt.

" More than once," ſaid a lady to me, when converſing on the ſubject with her, " I have attempted to oppoſe ridicule, " as well as reaſon, to the Archducheſs's " prepoſſeſſion. She remained immove- " able, and always perſiſted that ſhe " ſhould die ſoon. One day as ſhe held " this language, I ſaid to her, ' Eſt il donc " poſſible que votre Alteſſe oublie qu'elle a " une fille qu'elle aime tendrèment? Et " peut elle la quitter avec tant de ſang froid " et d'indifference?'—' Vous croyez donc,' " anſwered the Princeſs, ' que je vous " laiſſerai *mon jeune?*' (the appellation by " which ſhe always called her daughter.)

" ' Oh!

" 'Oh! ma foi, non! vous ne la gardereż " tout au plus, que ſix ou ſept ans." This reply will appear the more extraordinary, when I add, that the child died at the age of about ſeven years, and conſequently that her mother's prediction was literally accompliſhed.

In the ſummer of the year 1763, ſhe was a ſecond time declared to be pregnant; but as ſhe advanced towards the term of her delivery, a perſuaſion that her death approached, acquired new force. She was, notwithſtanding, to all appearance, in a ſtate of perfect health. The Archducheſs Chriſtina, ſince married to Prince Albert of Saxony, enjoyed a diſtinguiſhed place in her affection and friendſhip. To her the Archducheſs Joſeph not only declared that ſhe ſhould die before the end of the year, but ſhe laid her a bett of it. The circumſtance was public, and generally known at the time. Returning in the autumn to Vienna from the palace of Laxembourg, where the Court had paſſed the ſummer; when the carriage reached the ſummit of the hill

whence the city is ſeen, ſhe was ſeized with a ſhivering, and exclaimed that ſhe was about to die.

The month of November, nevertheleſs, arrived, without any apparent ſymptoms to juſtify her prediction, or prepoſſeſſion; but, ſhe perſiſted in it. On the eighteenth, at night, as ſhe was ſitting in her own apartment, an alarum clock which ſtood there, ſtruck ſeveral times after it ought to have ceaſed. This accident, probably cauſed by ſome diſorder in the ſprings or mechaniſm, appeared to the Archducheſs to be ſupernatural. She turned pale, and on the ladies who were with her enquiring the cauſe. "It is the ſignal," ſaid ſhe, "that calls me away;" pointing to the clock. She continued notwithſtanding, in health till the following day, the nineteenth of November, which was the anniverſary of her birth, when ſhe had completed her twenty-ſecond year. In the morning the Archducheſs Chriſtina rallied her on her abſurd apprehenſions, for which no viſible cauſe was to be perceived or aſſigned. Ex-

cept

cept the inconvenience and indiſpoſition neceſſarily attached to her advanced ſtate of pregnancy, ſhe had no bodily complaint.

Towards the evening, as ſhe was walking acroſs her chamber, ſhe ſuddenly fell, or rather ſunk down on her knees. They immediately laid her on a couch, and ſent for medical aſſiſtance. A fever, and ſhortly afterwards the ſmall-pox appeared. She became delirious in the courſe of the diſorder; during which time, in the incoherence of inſanity, ſhe uttered a thouſand wild expreſſions. As ſhe called on many perſons by name, whom ſhe imagined ſhe ſaw about her bed; it was ſuppoſed by ſuch as attributed her dejection to love, that ſhe fancied ſhe beheld the object of her firſt paſſion, the Italian lover, who had always reigned in her affections. For ſome days before ſhe died, no hopes of her recovery were entertained, and ſhe expired on the 27th of November 1763, after ſtruggling with her malady about a week. The Archduke her huſband, who attended her through every

ſtage of the diſtemper, ſcarcely quitted her bedſide till ſhe breathed her laſt. Sinking under exceſs of grief, added to the fatigue which he had undergone, his attendants were obliged to carry him away by force from ſo affecting a ſcene. Joſeph was long inconſolable for her loſs, and ſtill retains the warmeſt attachment to her memory. He loves to talk of her, to dwell on her praiſes, and to ſhew her picture, which he wears in his watch, and which I have myſelf ſeen. The young Archducheſs Thereſa, according to her mother's prediction, died, as I have already mentioned, ſoon after ſhe had completed her ſeventh year, in January 1770; a circumſtance which naturally renewed his ſorrow.

After ſo minute a recital of the circumſtances that preceded and accompanied the death of the Emperor's firſt wife, I feel it indiſpenſable to ſubjoin my opinion of the degree of credit due to them. Certainly, if human teſtimony can prove any fact, there is the ſtrongeſt imaginable in favour of the Archducheſs's predictions; namely, that

that of the Empreſs Queen herſelf, her daughters, and half the ladies of the Court. It ſeems difficult to ſuppoſe, or to aſſign an adequate reaſon, why they ſhould deceive themſelves, or impoſe upon others. But we muſt make great allowance for credulity and ſuperſtition. It is likewiſe to be remembered, that the Princeſs of Parma, from whatever cauſe, was a woman of a nervous, melancholy habit, who always ſaw death before her diſtempered imagination. When under the influence of low ſpirits, ſhe ſaid ſhe ſhould not live long, and that her child would not ſurvive her many years. If the events thus foretold, had not happened, they would have been ridiculed and forgotten. But, their accidental accompliſhment give them celebrity; and when we add beſides, the love of the marvellous, ſo common in human nature, we ſhall not find any thing very extraordinary, or incredible, in the anecdotes above related.

Scarcely more than four months after the deceaſe of his wife, in April 1764, the

Archduke Joſeph was elected and crowned King of the Romans; an event which ſerved equally to occupy, and to diſſipate the gloom of the Imperial Court. But he was not eaſily induced to think of a ſecond marriage, for every propoſition of which nature he expreſſed the ſtrongeſt repugnance. Wearied by the importunies of his father the Emperor, more than induced by his mother's entreaties, and deſirous himſelf of male iſſue, he reluctantly conſented at length to gratify their wiſhes. A conſiderable degree of embarraſſment and uncertainty occurred, nevertheleſs, in the choice of a perſon to ſupply the place of the deceaſed Archducheſs. There were many parties in the Court, and each had a favorite object of ſelection. Elizabeth of Brunſwic, who was ſince married to the Prince Royal of Pruſſia, certainly nouriſhed hopes or expectations of marrying the King of the Romans, and was mentioned to the Empreſs Queen, but without effect. The Princeſs Donna Benedicta of Portugal, youngeſt daughter of the late King, had

very

very nearly been chofen. She was at that time juft nineteen, beautiful in her perfon, and in all refpects an eligible alliance. Some overtures, not amounting to a formal demand, were made on the fubject to the Court of Lifbon, and favorably received. The Countefs Tarocca, one of the late Emperor's moft intimate friends and confidents, warmly recommended and fupported the Portuguefe Princefs. Count Dietrichftein, Mafter of the Horfe, enforced Madame de Tarocca's recommendation, and offered to go in perfon for her to Lifbon. But, Francis, informed that from her figure fhe did not feem likely to produce children, rejected the alliance; a circumftance juftly regreted in the fequel by himfelf, and by every one elfe.

After long indecifion, the choice feemed from neceffity rather than inclination, to lie between two Princeffes, Maria Jofepha of Bavaria, and Maria Cunegonda of Saxony. The latter, who was youngeft daughter of Auguftus the Third, King of Poland, appeared for fome time likely to obtain the preference. Her interefts

terefts were ftrongly fuftained by the Arch-duchefs Chriftina, who being herfelf attached to Prince Albert of Saxony, naturally defired to cement by every means the connexion with that family and country, as calculated to facilitate her own wifhes and objects. The Princefs Cunegonda was born in November 1740, only four months before the King of the Romans. She had not indeed the pretenfions to perfonal beauty, with which Voltaire has decorated her namefake, the daughter of the Baron de Thunder-ten-Tronck, in "Candide." But, neither was her Bavarian rival more favored by nature in that refpect. Jofeph confented to fee her, in order to form an opinion, and fubfequently confult his own inclinations. In the fummer of the year 1764, it was contrived that they fhould meet, as if by accident, at a little hunting party, not far from the baths of Toplitz, in Bohemia, near the Saxon frontiers. Thither the Princefs Cunegonda repaired on horfeback, and was met by the King of the Romans. Their interview was fhort, but

decifive;

decifive; Jofeph having declined any further efforts to obtain her hand. As a fort of recompence for the rejection, the Court of Vienna has fince interefted itfelf in her affairs, by procuring her election as co-adjutrix to the abbies of Effen and Thorn, about three years ago. It is curious to confider the wide interval between an Abbefs and an Emprefs; between the obfcure direction of a female convent, in a fequeftered part of Germany, and the luftre of the Imperial Crown. But, the Saxon Princefs has probably had reafon to rejoice in an exclufion, which leaves her at leaft liberty, independence, and competence; while the unfortunate Bavarian, felected in her place, prefented to the world a fpectacle of the higheft rank, united with the greateft mifery.

Maria Jofepha of Bavaria was two years older than her intended hufband, having been born in March 1739. She was daughter to Charles the Seventh, Emperor of Germany, Maria Therefa's inveterate enemy, at the commencement of her reign. But, thefe ancient animofities were overlooked and

and obliterated from reafons of convenience, or motives of ftate. Some vague expectations and claims upon the Bavarian fucceffion, founded on the poffible extinction of the reigning line in the perfon of the Elector Maximilian, brother to the Princefs, conduced likewife, as is believed, to determine the choice in her favor. The event then forefeen, has fince taken place, and given rife to the war which actually fubfifts between Auftria and Pruffia. While the marriage was ftill uncertain, the Emprefs Queen, defirous of hearing the opinions entertained relative to the two Princeffes, took occafion to confult a Nobleman of the Court on the fubject, requefting him to inform her candidly, which of them he would prefer, if it was his own cafe. As he had feen them both, he was competent to form a judgment; but, though long accuftomed to converfe with her Majefty in the moft unreferved manner, and to fpeak very freely to her on many points; he felt the queftion to be delicate, and therefore declined giving his opinion or advice. Maria Therefa preff-

ing him, neverthelefs, to fpeak his fentiments, and affuring him that he could not offend her by any remarks or obfervations, however fevere; "Madame," anfwered he, "fi j'etois le maitre de mes actions, je ne "voudrois ni l'une ni l'autre: mais, le couteau au gofier, et devant abfolument en "prendre une, je choifirois plutôt la Bavaroife, parceque au moins a t'elle de gorge." The Emprefs laughed heartily at the reafon affigned for his preference, which fhe admitted to be not devoid of foundation.

On the fifteenth of January, 1765, the Princefs Maria Jofepha having arrived at Vienna from Munich, the marriage ceremony was immediately performed, without even allowing her previoufly to change her drefs, which was a riding habit. I am affured by perfons who were prefent on the occafion, that fhe was at that time by no means an object of averfion; though fhe poffeffed neither the elegance, nor the accomplifhments of her predeceffor, the Infanta of Parma. Her hufband himfelf appeared to be not diffatisfied with her; and it

was

was hoped that the pleaſing qualities of her mind and diſpoſition, might compenſate for the want of perſonal attractions. Even her enemies admit that ſhe was amiable, obliging, affable to all, and diſpoſed to every kind or benevolent ſentiment; but her underſtanding was narrow, as well as deficient in cultivation. Humble even to obſequiouſneſs in her behaviour towards Joſeph, whom ſhe loved with ardor, ſhe vainly tried by every means to acquire ſome intereſt in his affections. Her careſſes and her fondneſs only tended ſtill more to alienate his heart.

I am not at liberty to divulge all that I may know relative to the perſon of the unfortunate Princeſs in queſtion, nor from the peculiarity of the ſubject, if I were ſo, would it be proper. It is certain that ſhe had defects which prevented the great object of the alliance; namely, her producing children. Theſe defects, from their very nature, could not, or ought not, to have been unknown to the Elector of Bavaria her brother; and it was no leſs injudicious than diſhonorable, not to have declared them

previous

previous to the treaty of marriage. In fact, the nuptials were scarcely consummated, though she was once believed to be with child; and on that account, when the rest of the Imperial Family went into the Tyrol, in the summer of the year 1765, she remained behind at Vienna. But all expectations of issue from the union, soon vanished. Joseph even ceased to cohabit with her, and expressed towards her only disgust. The recollection of his first wife, increased his dislike to the second, of which he made no secret to those with whom he lived on terms of intimacy. To complete the misfortune of the Queen of the Romans, a violent scorbutic humour that covered her face and body with eruptions, rendered it impossible to approach her without sentiments of repugnance. Joseph, in the bitterness of his vexation, lamented his destiny at being united to her. A lady of the Court, with whom he lived in the closest friendship, and who, from her virtues as well as from the superiority of her mind, merited all his confidence; has assured me, that

that he used frequently to come to her, in order, by her converſation and ſociety to diſſipate his chagrin. Diſcloſing to her his domeſtic vexations, and contraſting the qualities of his firſt and ſecond wife; "Ma "femme," ſaid he, "me devient inſup-"portable. Je n'y reſiſte plus. On veut "que j'ai des enfans. Le moyen d'en avoir? "Encore, ſi je pourrois mettre le bout du "doigt ſur la plus petite partie de ſon "corps qui n'étoit pas couverte de boutons, "je tacherois d'avoir des enfans." Anne of Cleves could not have been more odious to Henry the Eighth, than was the Bavarian to Joſeph the Second.

Of all the Imperial Family, only the Emperor Francis treated her with tenderneſs, protected, and ſheltered her. The goodneſs of his heart, and the mildneſs of his nature, inclined him to pity a wretched Princeſs, who was more an object of compaſſion, than of deteſtation. But his death, which took place only ſeven months after her marriage, filled up the meaſure of her misfortunes. On the arrival of the intelli-

gence

gence from Inſpruck at Vienna, ſhe wept bitterly, often exclaiming in the anguiſh of her feelings, "Ah! Malheureuſe! j'ai "perdu mon ſeul Appui!" Joſeph, by his father's deceaſe, became Emperor; but, the increaſe of dignity produced no amelioration of the young Empreſs's condition. The remainder of her life was only a ſeries of privations and mortifications. She ſaw herſelf neglected, deſpiſed, and abandoned. Even her mother-in-law, the Empreſs Queen, though naturally beneficent and kind, yet behaved towards her with coldneſs. The Archducheſs Chriſtina, who had always oppoſed the alliance, did not conceal her averſion for the Bavarian Princeſs. Joſeph was neither mollified by her ſubmiſſion, nor touched by her attachment; though her conſciouſneſs of being diſpleaſing to him was ſuch, and her apprehenſion of him ſo ſtrong, that ſhe would tremble and turn pale, whenever he entered the room.

Death at length releaſed them from their mutual wretchedneſs. The young Em-

preſs ſickened of the ſmall-pox, in the month of May 1767, and the ſymptoms, from the beginning, were of the moſt alarming nature. Maria Thereſa caught the diſtemper from her daughter-in-law, but recovered. As long as his mother remained in health, the Emperor excuſed himſelf from viſiting his wife, under pretence of the danger he ſhould incur of communicating to the Empreſs Queen ſo fatal a diſorder. It was in vain that the unhappy Princeſs, apprehenſive of her approaching end, ardently requeſted once more to ſee her huſband. She even wrote to him, as it is ſaid, to demand this laſt proof of his regard. Joſeph ſtill continued inflexible; but, after his mother had contracted the ſame malady, there remained no longer any decent excuſe for his refuſal. He then viſited the dying Empreſs, and expreſſed his concern for her ſituation. The ſpecies of ſmall-pox which ſhe had caught, was of ſo malignant a kind, that it is affirmed, ſhe mortified in many parts of her body before death. Portions of her

face

face became black and putrid; ſo that had ſhe even ſurvived, ſhe would have become an object too hideous for ſight. Under ſuch circumſtances, her diſſolution, which took place on the 28th of May 1767, could only be regarded as a fortunate releaſe. It is not a little ſingular, that the two wives of Joſeph the Second ſhould both have been carried off by the ſame diſtemper, in the courſe of three years and a half; after having conſtituted, one his felicity, and the other, his torment. He has conſtantly rejected all propoſitions of entering a third time into the married ſtate, and it is believed that he will perſiſt in his determination.

During the life of the firſt Archducheſs, to whom he was tenderly attached, Joſeph was never ſuppoſed to feel a diſtinguiſhing preference for any other woman. Even after her deceaſe, he remained ſo long a prey to grief, that the Empreſs Queen herſelf did not ſcruple to encourage and requeſt the moſt beautiful or accompliſhed women of the Court, to endeavour to rouſe him from his dejection. His ſecond marriage,

 far

far from renewing the happineſs that he had experienced in the firſt, only rendered him by compariſon more wretched. In ſuch a ſituation, it was no leſs natural than venial, that he ſhould form an attachment, at leaſt of mind, to ſome object. Among the ladies of the higheſt quality at Vienna, might juſtly be accounted Mademoiſelle de Battiani, daughter of Marſhal Prince Battiani, who had been Joſeph's governor. Their acquaintance commenced at a very early period of their lives. Her perſon, if not beautiful, was elegant and intereſting; her mind and manners pleaſing, no leſs than accompliſhed. When very young, ſhe had been married to Count Windiſchgratz, a match which was always conſidered as one of mutual inclination.

Driven by domeſtic infelicity to find conſolation and amuſement abroad, the Emperor, during ſeveral years, previous, as well as ſubſequent, to the death of his ſecond wife, paid Madame de Windiſchgratz the moſt conſtant and diſtinguiſhing attention. In a ſelect ſociety with her, the Counteſs

Eſterhazi

Eſterhazi her ſiſter, and a few others of both ſexes, he was accuſtomed to paſs moſt of his evenings. Among the number of perſons uſually admitted, was Count Choteck, for whom it was ſuppoſed that ſhe felt a much greater partiality than for Joſeph. But, as ſhe always treated his Imperial Majeſty with marks of regard and predilection, he appears neither to have felt or expreſſed any jealouſy on that account. His paſſion, if ſuch it can with propriety be denominated, was unqueſtionably not of a nature to exact any ſacrifices incompatible with female honor. Whether the moderation of his deſires, or the virtue of the Counteſs, formed her beſt ſecurity, it is certain that her character never ſuffered any juſt attaint from the Emperor's aſſiduities. They had for their principal, if not ſole object, her converſation and ſociety. Content with this intercourſe, he probably aſpired to nothing beyond it, and was rather to be conſidered as her friend and companion, than as her lover.

 Madame

Madame de Windifchgratz's health and conftitution, which were naturally delicate, having fuffered fo much from the fevere climate of Auftria, that fhe was menaced with a confumption, the baths and air of Pifa were recommended. She accordingly repaired thither fome years ago, accompanied by her hufband. After paffing about twelve months in Italy, fhe returned to Vienna, apparently in perfect health, and completely recovered. Far from appearing to have fuftained any diminution by abfence, on the contrary, the Emperor's attentions redoubled towards her. But, with the approach of winter, her complaints, which had lain dormant for fome months, revived with violence. They foon affumed a dangerous afpect, and all the fymptoms of a confirmed diforder of the lungs manifefted themfelves. In this fituation, Jofeph fhewed her proofs of partiality, which did honor to the goodnefs of his heart, and which fufficiently proved that his attachment had for its principal object, qualities unconnected with beauty of perfon. As fhe was unable

able to partake of public diverſions, or even to appear in company, he uſed to paſs almoſt every evening at her houſe. In the months of February and March 1777, when her cough had ſo enfeebled her, that ſhe was no longer in a ſtate to converſe, he not only continued his viſits, but tried to amuſe and enliven her by reading to her for ſeveral hours at a time.

Soon afterwards, in April 1777, being about to viſit France, he went on the morning of his departure, to take a laſt leave of Madame de Windiſchgratz. Such an interview muſt have been extremely painful, as both were equally conſcious that they ſhould probably ſee each other no more. A lady of the Court told me, that ſhe met the Emperor, as he was aſcending the ſtaircaſe which led to the Counteſs's apartment; he ſtopt to ſpeak to her, but his voice was almoſt choaked, and he appeared to be in the greateſt diſtreſs. In effect, he never again ſaw the object of his affection, as ſhe died in the following month. It is natural to ſuppoſe that he muſt have been very deeply

deeply ſenſible to ſuch an event. I am nevertheleſs aſſured that if he was ſo, he expreſſed at leaſt no extraordinary concern, nor betrayed much emotion on receiving the intelligence; a circumſtance only to be explained by ſuppoſing that he could not be ignorant of, or unprepared for it, the nature of her diſorder leaving no hope of her recovery. When the information reached him, it muſt likewiſe be recollected that he was diſtant from her, and ſurrounded at Paris by a thouſand objects, calculated to occupy or diſtract his attention.

Whatever was the nature of the Emperor's attachment to her, whether it partook moſt of eſteem, or of tenderneſs; it is certain that his heart was by no means ſhut againſt other impreſſions, even during her life. Previous to her deceaſe he had already manifeſted a ſtrong partiality for another perſon. The Princeſs Charles Lichtenſtein, if ſhe did not ſupplant Madame de Windiſchgratz in his Majeſty's affections, at leaſt occupied a very diſtinguiſhed place in

his

his regard. When the latter was no more, Joſeph transferred all his attentions to the Princeſs, and they continue to ſubſiſt at this moment in their full force. She is daughter of the Count of Oettingue Spielberg, and may be now four-and-thirty years of age. As long ago as the year 1761, ſhe married Prince Charles Lichtenſtein, one of the moſt gallant, amiable, and handſome noblemen of the Imperial Court. Her perſon is pleaſing, and though her features cannot be eſteemed regular, their expreſſion is admirable. Her mouth is peculiarly beautiful, and over her whole figure is diffuſed an air of modeſty, intelligence, and dignity, rarely blended in any woman. She poſſeſſes beſides an enlarged and cultivated mind, a fund of amuſing converſation, and powers of entertaining, as well as improving, very ſuperior to the generality of her ſex in Vienna. In mentioning theſe particulars, I ſpeak in ſome meaſure from my own knowledge, added to information, as I have the honor to be perſonally acquainted with her.

Flattered as ſhe unqueſtionably is with the partiality, and gratified by the attentions of the firſt Crowned Head in Europe, ſhe has invariably acted with ſuch caution and regard to her own honor, as to maintain unſullied the purity of her character. No one ventures to ſuppoſe, and ſtill leſs to aſſert, that ſhe has yielded to him any thing inconſiſtent with the ſtricteſt virtue. She is the object of his affection and friendſhip; not his miſtreſs. Thoſe who know her, entertain the firmeſt conviction, that even if the Emperor's ſolicitations were ever ſo ſtrong, yet, her ſenſe of what ſhe owes to her family and herſelf, added to a religious and ſerious turn of mind, would render her ſuperior to ſeduction. But, Joſeph's attachment to her is not perſonal, though it may be difficult to ſay what are the preciſe limits which his moderation, or her principles, affix to the connexion. She rarely, or never receives him alone, though ſhe ſees him continually at her own houſe, as well as in private ſociety. Even at the theatre, a lady conſtantly remains in the box with her, when

his

his Majeſty is there. A conduct, the reverſe of the late Emperor's; who, when in the Princeſs of Auerſberg's box, never admitted any intruſion, and locked it on the inſide. It is in the converſation of the Princeſs Charles Lichtenſtein, that Joſeph finds the moſt pleaſing relaxation from public buſineſs, as well as from private diſquietude; and this probably forms the principal tye by which they are united. She diſclaims even the ſmalleſt political influence or credit with him. I have heard her do ſo; as he, on his ſide, frequently cites a maxim from which no Sovereign ſhould deviate. It is, that "Princes never "ought to allow a woman, let her merit "or talents be what they may, to acquire "an aſcendancy over their affections, on "account of the political conſequences "which almoſt always reſult from ſuch a "paſſion."

At this time his Imperial Majeſty uſually paſſes four evenings every week, with the Princeſs Charles Lichtenſtein, and a little circle chiefly compoſed of females. They are, beſides

besides the Princeſs herſelf, her ſiſter, the Counteſs Erneſt Kaunitz, her ſiſter-in-law, the Princeſs Francis Lichtenſtein, and the two Princeſſes Clari and Kinſki. Marſhal Lacy, who has been attached near twenty years to the Princeſs Francis Lichtenſtein, is generally admitted into this ſelect ſociety; and Count Roſemberg, the Lord Chamberlain, is likewiſe, ſometimes, of the party. He is one of the moſt pleaſing noblemen of the Imperial Court; who, under a cold exterior, conceals qualities equally ſolid and ingratiating. Poliſhed in his manners, cultivated in his underſtanding, and highly acceptable to his maſter; if he poſſeſſed ambition equal to his talents, it is probable that he might act a conſpicuous part on the political theatre. But, his love of pleaſure, joined to the indolence of his temper, will retain him always in the ſhade. Neither Prince Charles Lichtenſtein, nor his brother Prince Francis, ever preſume to invade this Coterie, though their wives compoſe its moſt intereſting parts. The French Embaſſador, Monſieur de Breteuil, at his particular requeſt, was once

once or twice allowed to be there. Finding however, that his preſence was not acceptable to the Emperor, and that it impoſed a degree of reſtraint on the company, he withdrew himſelf.

The perſons above named, meet alternately at each other's houſes, to which Joſeph repairs with the utmoſt privacy, unattended and alone. I know that he himſelf conſtitutes its principal entertainment and occupation. He talks, and the ladies liſten. Lacy, as well as Roſemberg, are probably too experienced Courtiers, to invade this prerogative. Cards are never brought, for the Emperor diſlikes them. The laſt time that he ever ſat down to play, was in 1764, after his coronation at Francfort. It is true that the ladies, deſirous of varying the evening amuſement, attempted, ſome time ago, to introduce a book, by way of change; but, the experiment did not ſucceed. Joſeph prefers converſation. On the three evenings of the week which he does not paſs in the above-mentioned ſociety, unleſs prevented by public buſineſs, he commonly goes for a ſhort time to the Princeſs Eſterhazi's,

hazi's, or to Madame de Burckhaufen's. During the courfe of the prefent winter, unlike the laft, he has fhewn himfelf rarely at Prince Kaunitz's, or in any numerous companies.

Jofeph the Second is rather above than below the middle fize, and in no degree inclined to corpulency. Though not handfome, he may be accounted agreeable in his perfon, and when young, he muft have been elegant. Thofe perfons who faw him on the day of his nuptials with the Princefs of Parma, affert that they never beheld a finer youth. He was magnificently habited in the old Spanifh drefs, which was calculated to add to the natural advantages of his figure. The Countefs of Pergen, who was a fpectatrefs of his coronation at Francfort in 1764, has declared to me, that he appeared to her the moft majeftic and ftriking object on which fhe ever looked, when he was invefted with the royal robes and Infignia; his thick hair falling down over his back in ringlets. He had then a head of hair, fuch as is afcribed to Apollo by the Poets. So bald is

is he now become at thirty-eight, that on the crown of his head, ſcarcely any covering remains; and in order to conceal the defect, he wears a falſe toupee. His queue is very thin, but it is his own, and not an artificial one, like that of the Great Frederic.

The Emperor's countenance is full of meaning and intelligence. I have rarely ſeen a more ſpeaking phyſiognomy; and it is impoſſible to look at him, without conceiving a favorable idea of his underſtanding. His eye, which is quick, ſparkles with animation. The contour of his face is long and thin, his complexion fair, his noſe aquiline, his teeth white, even, and good. An air of mind, ſpread over his features, pleaſes and prejudices in his favor. The formation of his body and legs is by no means without defect, though he is capable of ſevere exerciſe, and of ſuſtaining great fatigue. Nor can his ſtate of health be accounted ſuch, as to afford a reaſonable proſpect of attaining to very advanced age. Beſides the anuriſm in his leg, which I have formerly mentioned, he has

has another extraordinary ſource of diſeaſe; it is an excreſcence, of the nature of a wen, on the crown of his head, which naturally increaſes in ſize, and may become dangerous in proceſs of time. Conſcious of the hazard that he muſt incur, if it ſhould grow large or ſuppurate; he has already conſulted Brambilla his ſurgeon, on the ſubject, who means to extract it with the knife. It is probable that the operation will not be long delayed.

No Prince can be more indifferent than the Emperor, with regard to all the delicacies, indulgences, and luxuries of life. Few Sovereigns devote ſo much time to buſineſs, and ſo little to pleaſure or diſſipation. It is very rare that he ever makes any perſon wait, who comes to him by appointment. "I was accuſtomed," ſays he, "to paſs too many hours in my father's antichamber, not to know from experience "how unpleaſant ſuch a detention muſt be "to others." Francis by no means obſerved the ſame punctuality in giving audience. Joſeph riſes early, and takes

for breakfaſt either coffee and milk, or chocolate, with which he mixes water, ſeldom eating any thing at that time. In order to diſpatch buſineſs with more facility, he generally dines alone; his dinner being dreſſed in the great kitchen of the palace, for he has no private kitchen. His meal, except on meagre days, or in Lent, conſiſts of five diſhes; a ſoup, Bouillè, vegetables, a Fricaſſee, and a Roti. Theſe are brought to his apartment in five deep diſhes, placed one upon the other, as the "Traiteurs" are uſed to do; and when ready, they are laid on the ſtove which heats the room, in order to keep them warm. The nominal hour for his dinner is two o'clock, but frequently he is ſo occupied, that he does not ſit down till five; and he then ſwallows it half cold, with only a ſingle ſervant to attend on him. Though he eats heartily, it is without any degree of delicacy, or ſelection; and he is ſo indifferent about every thing relating to the table, that he ſcarcely diſtinguiſhes game from poultry. Wine he rarely touches; and

and when he does, only in very ſmall quantity.

While at dinner, he generally talks to the perſon who waits on him, and afterwards frequently reſumes the buſineſs of the day. This is his conſtant mode of life here in Vienna, ſcarcely ever unbending in the ſociety of a few friends: a part of his character by no means amiable, and in which he certainly does not either imitate or reſemble the great philoſopher of "Sans Souci," who tempers the cares of royalty by the practice of Horace and Anacreon; by the circulation of the glaſs, and the company of men of letters or taſte. Joſeph's repaſts are ſolitary, ſoon finiſhed, and deſtitute of gaiety or conviviality. When travelling, or on a campaign, he relaxes however from this ſeverity, eats with the officers or noblemen about his perſon, and though extremely temperate in every reſpect, yet he is communicative, lively, and entertaining at table.

In bodily accompliſhments the Emperor is not deficient; ſupplying in activity what he

wants

wants either in ſkill or addreſs. He rides well, plays at Tennis, and is fond of hunting, or rather of ſhooting. The exerciſes as well as diverſions peculiarly characteriſtic of youth, he no longer conſiders as proper for his time of life; and that of dancing, in particular, he has long renounced. When Archduke, he danced extremely well, and even ſince his acceſſion to the Imperial dignity, he has not declined it on particular occaſions. The laſt time that he danced publickly at Court, was ſoon after the death of his ſecond wife, about eleven years ago, in a ſuperb "Ballet," with ſeveral of the young nobility of both ſexes. His partner was the Archducheſs Amelia, ſince married to the Duke of Parma, and who was then one of the moſt beautiful Princeſſes of Europe. He was magnificently habited in a fancy dreſs; and a circumſtance which ſeems very contradictory to the other features of his character is, that he not only wore Rouge himſelf, but, commanded all the gentlemen who danced in the "Ballet" with him, to do the ſame.

The late Emperor Francis, though superficial and ignorant in the essential branches of education or improvement, yet possessed many qualities calculated to dazzle and conciliate mankind. He was a liberal protector of all the fine arts, particularly Music, Painting, and Sculpture. Nor did he fail to expend very considerable sums in the encouragement, or the support of artists eminent in those walks. Joseph, on the contrary, appeared to be wholly insensible to the arts, not only before his father's death, but, for a considerable time afterwards. So little taste had he for painting, that he usually turned his back on the finest productions of the great masters, Flemish or Italian. Though endowed by nature with an excellent ear, he betrayed no partiality even for musick. For sedentary occupations, reading, and the improvement that results from the study of polite letters, he manifested a total disinclination. By degrees, however, his indifference for works of genius has diminished. He could not visit Italy, and become familiar with the monu-

monuments of art profufely fcattered over that beautiful country, without catching fome portion of enthufiafm. On his return from Rome and Florence, fome years ago, he began to difplay this change in his character; as the beft proof of which, he caufed the fineft pieces of painting to be collected from all the palaces of the Emprefs Queen, and brought to the "Belvedere." He even fuperintended in perfon, and directed the placing of the moft capital pictures, in the gallery of the above-mentioned palace. Prince Kaunitz piques himfelf on having, by his example and exhortations, awakened, directed, and formed the Emperor's tafte. He is no longer infenfible to the charms of mufick; and at this time he has private concerts frequently in his own apartments, where he and his brother the Great Duke of Tufcany perform. On the harpfichord Jofeph plays in a mafterly manner, accompanying the inftrument with his voice; and he is no mean performer on the violin. But, as a patron of learning, or the fine arts, it muft never-

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theleſs be admitted, that he neither manifeſts the ſame paſſion, nor extends to them the ſame munificent protection, which diſtinguiſhed his father.

By the demiſe of the late Emperor, he ſucceeded, without farther form of election, to the Imperial dignity; and he was at the ſame time conſtituted by Maria Thereſa, co-regent of all the hereditary dominions of the Houſe of Auſtria; an example which has hitherto neither been imitated by Catherine the Second in Ruſſia, nor by Mary of Braganza in Portugal. Thoſe Princeſſes, though both have ſons already at an age to mix in council, or to aſſume an active part in ſtate-affairs; yet, far from aſſociating them to the Government, have on the contrary retained the whole royal authority in their own hands. Perhaps there are moments, when the Empreſs Queen may regret that ſhe has delegated any portion of her power to her ſon. Unqueſtionably they have differed in ſentiment, on more than one important meaſure; and Frederic well knows that it is Joſeph, not Maria Thereſa,

with

with whom he is in fact contending at this hour, for the Bavarian succession. She remains indeed the efficient Sovereign, and is considered as such by her subjects. But, the degree of dignity and consequence annexed to the Imperial Crown, added to the consideration of her sex, age, and increasing infirmities, conduce to give to the Emperor very great and indefinite powers, both at home and abroad. Her maternal fondness has conferred, and the activity, combined with the ambition of his character, impel him to exercise many prerogatives, which in strictness, cannot be his till after her decease. It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to define what are the precise limits of their respective prerogatives; but, many acts of state evidently originate with, and are promulgated by Joseph, rather than by Maria Theresa. They bear the stamp of his mind, which only waited for the signal of his father's death, to develope and expand itself in a certain degree. I shall illustat this observation, which I have already made elsewhere, by an enumeration of some

ſome of the leading meaſures of Joſeph ſince 1765, whether in his capacity of Emperor of Germany, or as co-regent of Hungary and Bohemia. It is by following theſe guides, that you will be alone able to form an eſtimate of his real character, diſpoſition, and talents.

The firſt act of his adminiſtration, though one which was rather perſonal than political, merited great eulogiums, and tended to convey an elevated idea of his way of thinking on pecuniary points. The late Emperor left not only various landed eſtates in Germany and Hungary, purchaſed by himſelf during his life, but, likewiſe, a conſiderable treaſure in monied property, all which deſcended to his eldeſt ſon. Joſeph retained the lands, but he inſtantly gave up the money, amounting to ſome millions of florins, as a fund for paying the debts of the Crown, thus leaving himſelf, in ſome meaſure, dependent on the bounty of his mother. Such a proof that he felt no ſeparate or private intereſt diſtinct from that of the State, neceſſarily impreſſed his new

ſubjects with reſpect for his perſon, and is never mentioned here without a juſt tribute of praiſe.

This act of diſintereſtedneſs was immediately ſucceeded by another, calculated to acquire univerſal popularity, and to conciliate in a peculiar manner the affections of the lower ranks. On the north of Vienna are ſituated two very extenſive parks, or gardens; one called the "Prater," the other the "Hof Garten," almoſt adjoining the city itſelf. They were the immediate property of the Empreſs Queen, and none except perſons of quality ever entered them; even they enjoyed that privilege only during particular months of the year. Joſeph inſtantly after his acceſſion, threw open both theſe pleaſure-gardens, and gave the moſt ample permiſſion to every perſon of whatever deſcription, to walk or ride in them, at all ſeaſons. The game laws have likewiſe been relaxed, and leave has been granted to the peaſants to fire on, and deſtroy the wild boars; animals, which, under the late reign, were regarded as ſacred, and who committed with impunity the greateſt ravages

on

on the lands of the farmers. This edict excited no little diſcontent among the nobility; but, its effects on the inferior orders may be eaſily conceived. Other regulations, favourable to their perſonal emancipation from the ſeverity of feudal rights, and tending to diminiſh the power of the great proprietors, have ſince been iſſued by the Emperor.

All his meaſures ſeem more or leſs obviouſly directed to ſuppreſs expence, and to expedite or facilitate the diſpatch of public buſineſs in every department. Francis loved diverſions, entertainments, and the ſplendor of royalty; Joſeph reſembles him in none of theſe reſpects. During the late reign, there always exiſted a French theatre in Vienna; but, as the concourſe of people who reſorted to it, was not ſufficiently numerous to defray the expences of the houſe, gaming-tables were permitted by Government. Every Faro table paid ten ducats, or about four guineas, to the managers of the theatre; and from this ſource, aided by the Emperor's private liberality, the French Comedy derived

derived a great part of its ſupport. His preſent Majeſty publiſhed an "Ordonnance," on his attaining the Imperial dignity, by which Faro, and every other Game of Hazard, previouſly allowed at the French Theatre, were prohibited. The neceſſary conſequence of ſuch a regulation, was the loſs of the Comedy itſelf, which could no longer ſubſiſt, unleſs by a pecuniary gratification from the private purſe of the Sovereign, which he did not think proper to beſtow on a company of foreign comedians.

From the Theatre, Joſeph proceeded to regulate the Court, and all the public offices. During the late Emperor's life, the number of Birth-days and Gala-days obſerved at Court was prodigious, amounting to near forty in a year. All the nobility, miniſters, and great officers, civil as well as military, appeared at the drawing-room on thoſe occaſions; and the expence neceſſarily incurred by the ſplendid ſuits worn, was frequently productive of ſerious inconvenience. One of the firſt acts of Joſeph, was totally to aboliſh both Gala and birth-days. He appointed

pointed at the ſame time, the firſt of January, as the anniverſary on which all the nobility ſhould kiſs the Empreſs Queen's and his hand, prohibiting any ſort of notice to be taken, or any attention to be paid to all other days without exception. He even enforces the moſt rigid obſervance of this order; nor does he permit his own immediate ſervants and attendants to expreſs the leaſt mark of feſtivity, nor to make the ſlighteſt alteration in their ordinary dreſs, on his own birth-day.

Till the death of Francis in 1765, the old Spaniſh habit, derived from the time of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, was univerſally worn at the Court of Vienna, on all days of Gala or ceremony. Francis, who ſcarcely ever appeared in a uniform, was accuſtomed to change his dreſſes very frequently, and affected magnificence of apparel. Joſeph has never worn any coat except a uniform, ſince his father's deceaſe. The Spaniſh habit, though ſplendid, connected with it many inconveniencies: among others, preſcription had authorized that the

the Aulic Counſellors never could meet for the diſpatch of buſineſs, except in that dreſs. Of courſe, affairs of importance were frequently poſtponed, and even ſacrificed to an abſurd Etiquette. The preſent Emperor, conſcious of the abuſe, and of the public detriment that reſulted from it, forbade the uſe of the Spaniſh dreſs on any occaſion whatever. He commanded the Aulic Counſellors, from that time forward, to aſſemble in their ordinary dreſs, and even obliged the members to meet after dinner, as well as in the morning, for the more prompt tranſaction of affairs.

In external addreſs Joſeph the Second is not deficient. His manners are eaſy, his converſation lively, voluble, and entertaining; running rapidly from one ſubject to another, and diſplaying frequently a vaſt variety of knowledge. Perhaps he manifeſts too great a conſciouſneſs of poſſeſſing extenſive information; and he may be reproached likewiſe with frequently anticipating the anſwers of the perſons with whom he converſes. A mixture of vanity and

and of impetuofity conduce to this defect. While he talks, efpecially if eager, he always plays with the money in his pocket. He writes with eafe, perfpicuity, and propriety. I have feen many of his notes, evidently compofed without premeditation, addreffed to perfons who enjoyed his confidence, both men and women. They demonftrate feeling, enlargement of mind, and as I have thought, goodnefs of heart. Yet, I know from indifputable authority, that he is a profound diffembler, rarely or never fpeaking his real fentiments upon any point of moment. On the other hand, he certainly permits thofe whom he loves or efteems, to deal fairly with him, to tell him not only plain, but painful truths; and even to reprehend him on occafion with feverity.

I have reafon to think, that his religious opinions are by no means contracted or illiberal. The bigotry and fuperftition which for ages have been hereditary in the Houfe of Auftria, and which ftill furvive in all their force in Maria Therefa, will probably

be

be extinct in her successor. But, I am far from meaning to insinuate that he is therefore tinctured with infidelity, deism, or any of the doctrines inculcated at Ferney, and at "Sans Souci." The very reverse is the fact. When he passed through Switzerland, he declined seeing or visiting Voltaire; not less, I believe, from his own choice, than at his mother's request. Joseph, though no bigot, is a Catholic, convinced of the truths of the Christian Religion, and conforming to its injunctions in his practice. He not only confesses regularly, but as soon as he rises, he never fails every morning to offer up his prayers to God, kneeling; as he does in the same posture before he retires to rest. I cannot err in this fact, which I derive from an eye-witness of the highest rank, who would neither flatter nor deceive. If, in the enumeration of so many minute particulars, I may have related some which seem discordant or contradictory, it must be remembered that man is composed of inconsistencies, and ever at variance with himself.

At no period of his life has the prefent Emperor been a libertine, or addicted to exceffes in the article of women, as was Francis his father, and as his brother Leopold is well known to be at this time. For the Countefs Windifchgratz, and for the Princefs Charles Lichtenftein, he never nourifhed any fentiment except friendfhip, cemented by efteem and confidence. Affiduous, rather than tender, moderate in all his defires, and content with the fociety of his miftrefs, he is a companion, not a lover. His amours, when he has had any, have always been of fhort duration, managed with privacy, and unaccompanied either with fcandal or expence. Yet, in a crowd, under fhelter of the night, where he conceives that he is neither known nor obferved, he likes to accoft women, and perhaps to take fome harmlefs liberties with their perfon, which is the utmoft extent of his gallantry. As the Emperor has no miftrefs, fo he has in reality no favorite. Several perfons have feemed to be fo for a time, and have believed themfelves in poffeffion of his perfonal affection,

fection, but they have been deceived. General Noſtitz, whom he diſtinguiſhed exceedingly during a certain period, has proved the truth of this fact. The two Counts, Cobenzel, and Joſeph Colloredo, both of whom accompanied him to Paris in 1777, poſſeſs, it is true, much of his eſteem and confidence; but, they are not favorites. Count Dietrichſtein, from long habits of familiarity with the Emperor, added to the ſpirit of independence, the frankneſs, and gaiety of diſpoſition, which eminently characterize him, enjoys, and exerciſes more than any nobleman of the Court, the privilege of ſpeaking truth to his Maſter. That his Majeſty honors, as well as reſpects Laudohn, and conſults him on every military point of importance, is unqueſtionable. For Lacy he reſerves his friendſhip, viſits him at all hours, converſes with him unreſervedly, and communicates to him his moſt ſecret thoughts.

Joſeph and Frederic, unlike the generality of Princes, are perſonally known to each other, and have twice met in their

respective dominions. The first of these two celebrated interviews, took place about four years after the death of the late Emperor Francis, when his present Majesty was not nine-and-twenty. It originated with the King of Prussia, who, desirous no doubt, of forming his own opinion on the character and talents of the new head of the Empire, caused it to be signified at the Court of Vienna, that a meeting between them would be highly agreeable to himself. The proposal having pleased, Count Dietrichstein, Master of the Horse, was sent to Breslau, to confer with Frederic, and to settle all the preliminaries. Neiss, a town in Silesia, was fixed on for the place of rendezvous, whither Joseph repaired in September 1769, accompanied by his brother-in-law Prince Albert of Saxony, Marshal Lacy, General Laudohn, Count Dietrichstein, and several other noblemen or military officers.

Arriving in his carriage, just before the hour of dinner, he was received by Frederic, at the foot of the staircase of the house which he occupied at Neiss; and after mu-

tually

tually gazing on each other for a ſingle moment, they embraced, with demonſtrations of reciprocal pleaſure. Each having preſented to the other the perſons who accompanied him; among whom, on the ſide of his Pruſſian Majeſty, were the Prince Royal his nephew, the Hereditary Prince of Brunſwic, and ſeveral general officers; the two monarchs ſat down immediately to a table of about thirty covers. Frederic was in excellent humor, and Joſeph appeared to be equally happy. About thirty thouſand troops had been drawn together, in order to entertain the Emperor; and Frederic taking the command of them in perſon, performed a variety of manœuvres, with which his gueſt expreſſed the utmoſt ſatisfaction. They paſſed three days together, during which time Joſeph was lodged at an inn in the town. A miſerable company of German comedians, brought thither for the purpoſe, ſerved, if not to enliven, at leaſt to paſs away the evenings. In the day-time, the two Sovereigns rode out ſide by ſide, and converſed with great

 famili-

familiarity: but, from the moment of their meeting, to that of their ſeparation, they never were alone together, except once for about ten minutes. On the fourth morning they parted, mutually impreſſed with a favorable idea of each other, and on terms of apparent amity. Buſineſs was not ever mentioned on either ſide, nor was it intended to form any part of the interview. Joſeph has been accuſed, I believe, without juſt reaſon, of treating the Hereditary Prince of Brunſwic with coldneſs at Neiſs. Even had he felt any ill-will towards that illuſtrious perſon, he is too ſkilful a diſſembler, to make it probable that he would manifeſt his diſlike on ſuch an occaſion, and before ſuch ſpectators.

The firſt interview between Frederic and Joſeph, unqueſtionably aroſe principally from the curioſity natural to both Sovereigns, to ſee and to converſe with each other. But, the ſecond meeting was meant for more concealed and important purpoſes. It took place juſt a year later, in the firſt days of September 1770, at the little town of

of Neuſtadt in Moravia, to which place his Pruſſian Majeſty came, in order to return the viſit. Unlike the Emperor, though far more advanced in years, he performed the journey from Breſlau entirely on horſeback; accompanied as before, by his two nephews, the Hereditary Princes of Pruſſia and Brunſwic, together with a number of general officers. Deſirous of ingratiating himſelf with Joſeph, whoſe co-operation he wanted in the projected partition of Poland, he arrived at Neuſtadt in an Auſtrian regimental. Not only the King himſelf, but, all the perſons with him, were dreſſed in white uniforms, with facings or lapels ſuch as in the Imperial ſervice are uſually given to recruits, before they are put altogether in full uniform. Frederic's was diſtinguiſhed from the reſt, by being embroidered at the button-holes with ſilver. When he diſmounted from his horſe, Joſeph was ready to receive him; and after they had embraced, as at Neiſs, the King pointing to thoſe who attended him, ſaid, "Votre "Majeſté verra que je lui ai amené des

 "recrus."

"recrue." The delicacy of ſuch a compliment could not be overlooked, and it tended to produce mutual good humour on their firſt meeting.

During the whole courſe of the repaſt which followed, Frederic ſtudiouſly obſerved a degree of reſpect towards the Emperor, making a motion as if to riſe, every time that a diſh was ſet before him, and offering it firſt to Joſeph, as his ſuperior. But, it was towards Prince Kaunitz that he exerted all his endeavours to pleaſe, to conciliate, and to captivate. That Miniſter, duped by the offers, or gained by the blandiſhments of Pruſſia, had accompanied his maſter, for the expreſs purpoſe of ſettling the preliminaries, and adjuſting the terms on which Poland was to be diſmembered. I have already entered on the ſubject elſewhere, and ſhall not, therefore, reſume it here. Frederic completely ſucceeded in his object, and the fate of the Poles was decided at Neuſtadt. Amuſements, military as well as theatrical, ſerved to veil the ſecret of ſtate from common eyes. Joſeph in his turn aſſembled thirty thouſand troops, for the inſpection of his

royal

royal gueſt, who paſſed them in review, and beſtowed on them high encomiums. Unfortunately, the weather, during the whole time that the interview laſted, was ſo rainy, as greatly to diminiſh the pleaſure of the two Sovereigns. Both were repeatedly wet to the ſkin; and Frederic, on his return from the field, having no other coat with him than the one which he wore, was obliged to ſtrip, and to remain in his own room, till his coat could be dried at the fire. This event produced no little merriment.

The Emperor made every poſſible exertion to amuſe and entertain his Pruſſian Majeſty, while at Neuſtadt. A private houſe, the beſt that could be procured in the town, was fitted up for his reception: in place of a ſtrolling company of German comedians, an Italian opera was performed; and Noverre, with all his "Figurantés," were brought from Vienna at a conſiderable expence, to dance the "Ballets." Frederic, with conſummate addreſs, always placed Prince Kaunitz between himſelf and Joſeph, when at the theatre, and ſhewed the Auſtrian Prime

Prime Minifter a thoufand attentions. After the performance, the political conferences were held. During the two firft days, no cloud arofe to indifpofe the two monarchs towards each other; but, on the third, the King received letters by a courier from Peterfburgh, the nature of which he did not immediately communicate to the Emperor, who conceiving that he had a right to know their tenor, manifefted fome ill-humor at their concealment. Frederic then grew in turn four, and out of temper. In this frame of mind they feparated next morning, alienated from each other as much, as they had been prepoffeffed favorably at their firft interview. But, Poland was not lefs facrificed to their mutual ambition. Thefe particulars are derived from the beft information.

Among the characteriftic features of Jofeph, muft be accounted his paffion for travelling; fcarcely any Prince of whom we read, having fo minutely examined his own dominions. Adrian, in antiquity, and Charles the Fifth, in modern ages, whofe

whofe whole reigns were a perpetual journey, can alone be oppofed in this point of view, to the prefent Emperor. He has vifited nearly all the Courts of Italy, and when he went to Paris, two years ago, it was his intention to have profecuted his tour as far as Madrid, if not to Lifbon. With that defign he traverfed the whole kingdom of France, and was already arrived at St. Sebaftian in Bifcay, on his way to the capital of Spain, when a courier from Vienna, informing him that the Emprefs Queen was greatly indifpofed, and that his return was neceffary, compelled him to defift from his further progrefs. Every part of Bohemia, Hungary, and Tranfylvania, he has rode over, almoft at a foot-pace: nor has he omitted to infpect the Sclavonian frontier, quite under the cannon of Belgrade. Of all the fcattered and extenfive territories, which will devolve to him at the death of Maria Therefa, the Auftrian Netherlands alone he has not yet furveyed in perfon. Along the Turkifh, as well as the Saxon and Silefian borders, he has caufed forts to be

be erected, and taken every precaution to guarantee thoſe provinces from invaſion. Lacy and Laudohn have uſually accompanied him in his progreſs; during which, far from regarding inconvenience or fatigue, his enemies rather accuſe him of needleſsly expoſing himſelf to both. In order to accuſtom himſelf to hardſhips, he commonly ſleeps upon a ſkin laid on the floor, and his table is not more delicate than his bed.

Still unſatisfied, while any part remained to viſit, he ſet out to inſpect the vaſt portion of Poland ſeized on in 1772, extending from the frontiers of Auſtrian Sileſia, to thoſe of Moldavia. The Emperor aſſured Sir Robert Keith, on his return from that expedition, in which he underwent every poſſible inconvenience; that among others, he was almoſt devoured by bugs, and in ſpite of all his precautions, he became louſy to a great degree. As a proof of it, he ſaid, that being one day employed in writing a letter to his mother the Empreſs, a louſe fell from his hair on the paper. "I "blew him off," continued he, "and "finiſhed

" finiſhed my diſpatch. Juſt as I was " about to ſeal it, I recollected a circum- " ſtance, which in my hurry had eſcaped " me. Having opened the letter again, in " order to inſert it, to my ſurprize, I found " the louſe had got poſſeſſion of his old poſt. " I attempted to diſlodge him, but he main- " tained his ground, and I therefore let " him alone, only adding, as a poſtſcript, " at the foot of the paper—One of your " Majeſty's new Poliſh ſubjects abſolutely " inſiſts on being preſented to you. I have " endeavoured in vain to prevent him, " and I have, therefore, encloſed him in " this letter." The anecdote, however trifling, may ſerve to ſhew the turn of Joſeph's mind, which is not deſtitute of humour.

In his expences and pleaſures he is very economical; a quality which has generally, though not univerſally, diſtinguiſhed ſuperior Princes, and which muſt facilitate all his enterprizes or operations, whenever he aſcends the throne. Neither women, nor play, nor diſſipa-

diſſipation drain his purſe. I aſked a lady who knows him well, whether he was ſuppoſed to have any natural children. "I "can't abſolutely ſay," anſwered ſhe; "but, "this I can take upon me to aſſert, that if "he has any, they will never be a charge "to the State. Cinquante ducats par ann "feront tout leur Appenage." In the month of January laſt year, a "Courſe de "traineaux" was exhibited in Vienna, for the amuſement of the Archducheſs of Milan. A quantity of ſnow had been brought into the city, on the ſame morning, in carts, which was ſcattered over the ſtreets through which the ſledges muſt neceſſarily paſs. The expence might amount to about ſix hundred florins, or ſomewhat more than ſixty pounds. I was ſtanding in a balcony, to view the ſpectacle, with two ladies of the Court. "You have no idea," ſaid they, "of the vexa-"tion that it will cauſe the Emperor, to throw "away ſix hundred Florins in ſnow." His attention on pecuniary points, extends to the minuteſt detail, and is imputed to him as a

fault;

fault; but, it muſt be allowed that his ſubjects may derive no little benefit from ſuch parſimony.

I have heard the queſtion much and frequently agitated here, among perſons who are moſt competent to decide, whether Joſeph is naturally generous, or penurious. Opinions are greatly divided on the point. He certainly is open to the impreſſions of compaſſion and benevolence, where he knows, or believes that the perſon recommended is a proper object of ſuch ſentiments. But, his heart is not one of thoſe, which, like Maria Thereſa's, delights in giving; and if it errs, only does ſo from an exceſs of liberality and kindneſs towards the unfortunate. The Emperor well knows that he is regarded as unlike her in this reſpect. "On m'accuſe," ſaid he, not long ago, "de n'être pas généreux; "mais, ſi je donnois comme ma mere, "nous n'aurions bientot rien à donner." It cannot however be denied, that the liberality of the former acquires her univerſal affection and popularity; while the ſtrict economy of her ſon, though it may augment

augment his reſources, does not tend to conciliate the love of his ſubjects.

The Emperor's perſonal courage is conſidered as indiſputable; yet, I think it ſtood higher in the public eſtimation before the late campaign, than it does at preſent. If he is brave, it certainly is not the bravery of a hero: it is neither the ſublime courage that diſtinguiſhed the great Condé, nor is it the cool intrepidity and contempt of death which Frederic has frequently diſplayed, when he has almoſt wantonly expoſed himſelf. The different ſituation of the two Princes, ought not, however, to be forgotten. So deſperate was the condition of his Pruſſian Majeſty at Lignitz, at Torgau, and on a variety of other occaſions during the great war of ſeven years, that defeat and death were to him almoſt the ſame thing. His troops required not merely example, but, the animation of deſpair, to enable them to conquer. Joſeph, ſecure in his intrenchments, his numbers, and his inattackable poſition, might conſult, like Louis the Fourteenth, his own ſafety, as well as his glory. It is

certain,

certain, that during the laſt campaign, he never ſhunned danger, but neither did he court it. No one ever ſaw him expoſe his perſon, though he paſſed the night repeatedly in the outpoſts, where Marſhal Haddick once ſurprized him, and took the liberty to reprehend him for ſuch imprudence; a freedom, which it is ſaid, diſpleaſed the Emperor.

His talents for war are however, much more problematical than his perſonal courage. That his preſence and interference were injurious to the Auſtrian arms, during the late campaign, no longer can admit of any doubt. If, like his father and grandfather, he had been content to remain at Vienna, and to delegate to others the conduct of military affairs, Laudohn would not have let ſlip the moment of attacking Mellendorf, on his retreat into Saxony; an opportunity which never can return, and for the loſs of which, that general will not eaſily forgive his maſter. That the Emperor loves war, that he beheld with pleaſure all the preparations for it, and that he ex-

pected to acquire reputation in the field, is indisputable. But, experience may have undeceived him, and have convinced him how widely different are theory and practice. Previous to the present hostilities, he panted for an occasion to put himself at the head of his forces, and to measure himself with Frederic.

On his journey to France, two years ago, passing through Munich, he had there a long interview with the Duchess Dowager of Bavaria, sister of the present Electress Palatine; a Princess of very superior endowments, who enjoys the confidence of his Prussian Majesty, and maintains a regular correspondence with him. The conversation, which was animated on both sides, produced insensibly a discussion of the comparative merits of Sovereigns, warlike and pacific. The Duchess artfully led him on to speak his sentiments, by preferring the latter description of Princes to the former. Joseph's eyes flashed fire, and no longer able to conceal his wishes; "Madame," said he, "J'aimerois mieux être capitaine

"dans mes propres grenadièrs, que d'être "Empereur, ſi je ne devois pas être Guer-"rier." Conſcious that he had diſcloſed too much, he afterwards endeavoured to do away the impreſſion; but, the Dacheſs was not to be ſo deceived. She foretold, that he would ſeize the firſt opportunity of coming to a rupture with Pruſſia, and would appear in perſon whenever war commenced. Time has proved that ſhe was not miſtaken in her conjecture.

All the qualities and paſſions of the Emperor are however, either ſubſervient to, or ſwallowed up in his ambition. Hence his affection for the ſoldiery, his inſpection of their barracks, his affectation of wearing, like Frederic, no other dreſs than a uniform, his ſolicitous attention to the ſick and wounded; in a word, his anxiety to acquire the confidence of the troops, and to ſhew them that in him they will find a father and a leader, no leſs than a Sovereign. Towards the Hungarians and Croats, he is accuſed

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accuſed of having manifeſted a partiality, which, if founded in fact, might occaſion general diſſatisfaction; but, he is probably too politic to alienate by ſo injudicious a preference, the hearts of his forces. They conſtitute the engine, by which he was enabled to ſeize on ſo large a portion of Poland in 1772, and on Lower Bavaria in 1778. It is only to them that he can look in the firſt inſtance, for the future ſupport, extenſion, and aggrandizement of his dominions. But, he muſt likewiſe look to another quarter for the means of fully gratifying his wiſhes on this, and on every other point: I mean, to the death of his mother, the Empreſs Queen. He may, and I believe he does, in common with his ſubjects, deprecate, more than deſire, ſuch an event. It is, nevertheleſs, the only one, which, by emancipating him from all reſtraint, can unveil his real character. The deceaſe of the late Emperor has half diſcloſed his qualities to the world,

and

and left the others concealed. I have delineated him to you as he now is, without partiality, as without prejudice. In order to know him completely, it is requisite that he ſhould ſurvive Maria Thereſa. Then, and not till then, we ſhall be able to appreciate in their utmoſt extent, the virtues, and the defects of Joſeph the Second.

LETTER XXXIV.

Character and anecdotes of Prince Kaunitz, first Minister of Maria Theresa.

VIENNA, *March* 13th, 1779.

THE picture that I have drawn of the Imperial Court, would ftill be incomplete and deficient, if not accompanied by fome particulars of Prince Kaunitz, who, though not at the head of the Auftrian finances, yet may juftly be denominated firft Minifter. His talents, fervices, and an uninterrupted poffeffion of power during near five-and-twenty years, leave him no competitor in the favour or efteem of Maria Therefa. His authority is too firmly confolidated, to be eafily fhaken, even by the event of her death; and it is probable, that he would occupy the fame fituation under Jofeph, which he has fo long filled in the Councils of the Emprefs. Born in February 1711, he has confequently completed his fixty-eighth year; but, the advances of age feem neither to have impaired the

the freſhneſs of his intellects, nor materially to have diminiſhed his bodily activity and ſtrength. At an early period of his life, he was initiated into public buſineſs, having acted in the capacity of civil Governor of Bruſſels, during the firſt years of the preſent reign. At the Congreſs of Aix-la-Chappelle in 1748, he was one of the Auſtrian Plenipotentiaries; and after the concluſion of peace, he went Embaſſador to the Court of Verſailles.

Whether his reſidence in France conduced to impreſs him with favorable ideas of that country, or whether views of policy alone have influenced him, it is unqueſtionable, that his advice and opinion have operated a total and a radical change in the Auſtrian ſyſtem of foreign alliance. There are not wanting perſons here, and thoſe perfectly well informed, who aſſure me that ſo great an alteration of meaſures originated in perſonal reſentment. They aſſert, that at the treaty of Aix-la-Chappelle, he was over-reached by the Engliſh plenipotentiaries, who not only ſigned the peace without his participation; but, afterwards

compelled him reluctantly to affix to it his ſignature. They add, that Kaunitz, whoſe gallantries have always formed a very prominent part of his character, was occupied in paying his court to a lady of whom he was deeply enamoured, while the Embaſſadors of Great Britain terminated the buſineſs. His reſentment at being ſo duped, prompted him to precipitate his miſtreſs and the Houſe of Auſtria, into the arms of their antient rival. If this ſtory is not true in its utmoſt extent, I believe on the other hand, that it is by no means deſtitute of foundation.

In 1754, at forty-three years of age, Prince Kaunitz having ſupplanted his predeceſſor, Count Ulhfeldt, was conſtituted Miniſter for Foreign Affairs. The great war, commonly called "the War of Seven Years," began ſoon afterwards. For a century and a half, the Houſe of Bourbon had been the inveterate enemy of every Emperor, from Ferdinand the Second, down to Charles the Sixth: while England, from the acceſſion of William the Third, almoſt invariably ſuſtained their intereſts. To the active interpo-

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ſition and aſſiſtance of the Cabinet of London, aided by the enthuſiaſm of the people, Maria Thereſa herſelf, when attacked by France and Bavaria, at the beginning of her reign, was not a little indebted for her preſervation. Prince Kaunitz, nevertheleſs, undertook, in defiance of every impediment, to unite the Courts of Vienna and Verſailles: he ſucceeded in the attempt, and concluded in 1756, the celebrated treaty, which ſtill continues to connect them. It is not unworthy of remark, that in the lapſe of two centuries, no matrimonial alliance had ever taken place between the Imperial Branch of the Auſtrian Family, and that of Bourbon; Elizabeth, daughter of the Emperor Maximilian the Second, having been married to Charles the Ninth of France, in 1570. The Archducheſs Maria Antonietta, by her union with Louis the Sixteenth, only eight years ago, in 1770, formed the laſt cement of this new ſyſtem, which ſeems likely to remain unſhaken, at leaſt during the life of the preſent Miniſter. At the moment that I am writing, the French Embaſſador acts openly as mediator on the part of Auſtria, and is about to appear in that character, at the

the approaching conferences for peace. We may neverthelefs reafonably doubt, whether the affectedinterpofition of France is not more oftenfible than real; and whether the Cabinet of Verfailles, far from wifhing to extricate, does not fecretly enjoy the embarraffments of its Imperial Ally. How can France, in fact, fincerely defire the aggrandizement of the Houfe of Auftria? Prince Kaunitz himfelf, though the original author of the prefent fyftem of alliance; yet, appears to feel how inefficacious it muft ever prove, in uniting or blending the interefts of the two ftates. On a variety of occafions, he has manifefted far more confideration for the Englifh nation, than for the French.

It is difficult to conceive any afcendant more confirmed, or any influence more imperious, than Prince Kaunitz's over the Emprefs: a circumftance, the fingularity of which is increafed, when we reflect that fhe is neither a weak, nor an indolent woman. In order to attain to fuch a height of power, we are naturally led to fuppofe, that befides his fuperior abilities for Government, he has not been negligent of the

arts

arts which conciliate royal favor. That he does not maintain himſelf in his preſent elevation, by any ſuch compliances or attentions, is, however, certain. Never did any Miniſter appear to ſacrifice ſo little either to the prejudices, or even to the wiſhes and requeſts of his Sovereign. He treats with equal indifference, the teſtimonies of her partiality, or of her reſentment. Far from deſiring to ſee her frequently, it is an act of compliance when he viſits her. His palace in Vienna is contiguous to that of the Empreſs, and not a hundred paces from her very chamber. He is not ignorant of the pleaſure which ſhe would receive, from ſeeing and converſing with him on matters of public buſineſs; yet, in defiance, or in neglect of her repeated meſſages, he rarely viſits her, except on particular occaſions, more than once in twelve days or a fortnight. Every thing is tranſacted between them by correſpondence.

As if it were not a ſufficient proof of his aſcendancy over her, to refuſe to gratify her reaſonable demands, he ſhocks her very prejudices. Nay, in more than one in-

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ſtance, Maria Thereſa has deſcended to acts of complaiſance, and almoſt of perſonal humiliation, in favor of her Miniſter, which I hardly can venture to mention, from their incredibility. Prince Kaunitz, till within the laſt few years, was not only attached to women, but gave himſelf no trouble to conceal his irregularities. On the contrary, it ſeemed as if he wiſhed to render them public and notorious. Actreſſes, dancers, and opera girls of diſtinguiſhed beauty or accompliſhments, lived under his immediate protection. The Gabrieli, who has been ſo celebrated, from Palermo to Peterſburgh; the Foliazzi, and various other Italians, known either by the charms of their voice or their perſon, have ſucceſſively ſhared the Auſtrian Miniſter's affection. It is a fact, that when he has gone to wait on the Empreſs, he has carried his miſtreſs in the carriage with him to the gate of the palace; and that ſhe has remained in the coach, while he went to tranſact buſineſs with her Majeſty, from whoſe preſence he immediately returned to her.

That a diſſolute, or a libertine Princeſs ſhould overlook and pardon ſuch treſpaſſes

againſt

againſt decorum, would not excite ſurprize; but, that a Sovereign, who is not only rigidly virtuous in her own conduct, but ſevere towards all infractions of morality in others, ſhould permit her firſt Miniſter with impunity to commit ſuch irregularities, appears a ſort of paradox. The greateſt ſubject in rank throughout the Auſtrian dominions, who, encouraged by the precedent, were to attempt the ſame thing, would ſoon repent his temerity. Even Prince Kaunitz himſelf has been, I am aſſured, many times on the point of receiving his diſmiſſion from all his offices; more however, on account of the obſtinacy with which he has refuſed to gratify, or obey the Empreſs's reaſonable commands, than from reſentment at his conduct in other reſpects. In vain would any future Miniſter attempt a ſimilar experiment: his diſgrace and ruin would be the infallible conſequence. Not only the preſent Miniſter's talents and ſervices plead for him. Long preſcription and habit have made his very weakneſſes reſpectable in Maria Thereſa's eyes. They have grown old together,

gether, have ſhared the ſame dangers, weathered the ſame ſtorms, and are now too intimately acquainted with each other's failings, as well as virtues, to ſeparate in the evening of life. Theſe cauſes ſufficiently account for his preſent, and probably ſecure his future authority againſt all attack. No man here looks forward to a change of adminiſtration, except by the death of the actual poſſeſſor. In caſe of ſuch an event, either Prince Staremberg, who now governs the Low Countries, or Count Cobenzel, lately returned from Berlin, where he was Envoy, are regarded as likely to ſucceed. The latter is about to aſſume an important part, in the negociations for peace between Auſtria and Pruſſia.

Againſt the event to which I have alluded, as the only one capable of cauſing an alteration in the councils of the Empreſs, Prince Kaunitz takes every poſſible precaution. No man ever dreaded diſſolution more, and age does not ſeem to have in any meaſure reconciled him to its approach. All his exertions ſyſtematically tend to pro-

long

long his life, and his powers of enjoyment, or of gratification. He neglects no means of protracting the term of his exiſtence, which ingenuity can deviſe, or wiſdom can ſuggeſt. At table, though he eats very plentifully, he no longer commits any exceſs; and in order to maintain his health, while he procures an appetite, he never fails to ride in the Manege for a conſiderable time, every day. A variety of horſes, brought from all parts of Europe, which he mounts by turns, and manages with no little force as well as addreſs, conſidering his age, equally contribute to amuſe, and to invigorate him. He has long ſince renounced every other pleaſure incompatible with his great object, the preſervation of life. Theſe attentions would be laudable, or at leaſt excuſable, if he had not the weakneſs to fear and to deprecate death, more than a wiſe man, who knows the uncertain tenure of mortality, can be juſtified in doing. His apprehenſions are ſo puerile, and ſo well known, that no perſon even mentions death in his preſence; a circumſtance of which ſtrangers are ſoon apprized, after their arrival at Vienna. Above all, he

dreads the small-pox; a diſeaſe which he has never had, and againſt which he is continually on his guard. Unleſs ſome unexpected accident ſhould ſhorten his career, he certainly bids fair to attain the age of Cardinal Fleury; and like him, to govern with almoſt unlimited authority, long after the period when men are uſually incapacitated, or indiſpoſed by infirmities, for active exertion.

Never, perhaps, did a Firſt Miniſter requeſt ſo few, and receive ſo many favors from his Sovereign, as Prince Kaunitz. I know from indiſputable authority, that the Empreſs confers, abſolutely unaſked and unſolicited, almoſt every gratification or emolument, which he and the other branches of his family poſſeſs. The eldeſt of his four ſons, Count Erneſt, is employed at home, and has been honored with the order of the Golden Fleece. Two of the others, Dominick and Joſeph, are foreign Miniſters, one at Madrid, the other at Peterſburgh. But, the Prince their father is not ſuppoſed to be rich; an inconteſtible proof that his ad-

miniſtration

miniſtration has been more directed to public objects, than to the accumulation of private wealth. Thoſe perſons who moſt ſeverely criticize, or reprobate his policy; and many ſuch are to be found here; yet admit his ſuperiority to every ſordid, or mercenary conſideration. So inattentive is he to the intereſts of his children, that they have frequently reproached him with indifference, or want of exertion on that head. It is difficult to aſcertain whether his contempt of money ariſes moſt from diſintereſtedneſs, careleſſneſs of temper, or a ſpirit of independence; perhaps, from a combination of all. His appointments, as Chancellor of State, and Miniſter, though conſidered as ample here, are far inferior to thoſe enjoyed by a Firſt Lord of the Treaſury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, with us. Including the allowance for his table, they do not exceed forty thouſand florins, or about four thouſand pounds ſterling a year. The difference in the value of money, and in the price of the eſſential articles of life, muſt, it is true, be allowed to be in favor of Vienna. But,

Prince

Prince Kaunitz ſits down regularly to a table of ſixteen or eighteen covers, every day; while an Engliſh Miniſter is not compelled to any ſuch expence.

In his perſon, Prince Kaunitz is tall, and well-made, though deſtitute of elegance or grace. If his face has not been handſome, it is neverthelefs a countenance, in which are ſtamped the ſtrong characters of ſenſe and intelligence. His manners are ſtiff; yet, there is in them ſomething characteriſtic and peculiar, which, while it forcibly attracts attention, by no means diſguſts or diſpleaſes. He uſually dreſſes with ſimplicity; but, on particular occaſions I have ſeen him magnificently habited. The "Toiſon d'or," ornamented with brilliants, he never fails to wear on his breaſt. He has likewiſe the order of "St. Stephen," inſtituted by Maria Thereſa in 1764; and he enjoys the peculiar privilege of wearing the ſtar in diamonds, which the ſumptuary laws here forbid to every other ſubject. The letter, or rather note, written to him by the Empreſs, when ſhe conferred on him this mark of diſtinction, is in a ſtyle ſo different

different from the ordinary one of Princes, and beſpeaks ſo much ſenſibility, that I cannot reſiſt inſerting it here. It is near thirteen years ago that Prince Kaunitz received it, on the marriage of the Archducheſs Chriſtina to Prince Albert of Saxony, in April 1766. The perſon who gave it me, copied it from the original; and I prefer it to any of the brilliant and ſtudied letters of Frederic, which are circulated and read with ſuch admiration, all over Germany.

"Ce n'eſt pas ſeulement par diſpenſe de
"Grand Maitre, mais par diſtinction, que
"vous pouvez porter la Croix de l'Ordre
"de St. Etienne, en diamans. Vous avez
"tant contribué à l'illuſtrer, que je ſaiſis
"avec avidité cette occaſion ſi chere à mon
"cœur, de vous temoigner ma reconnoiſ-
"ſance, qui vous eſt due depuis long tems,
"et qui ne finira qu'avec ma vie.

"MARIE THERESE."

After the careleſs, or independent manner in which he behaves towards the Empreſs, it cannot excite ſurprize, that he

treats his equals and inferiors, with ſtill greater marks of contemptuous unconcern. Towards the nobility at large of both ſexes, as well as towards the Miniſters of foreign Courts, he hardly obſerves any meaſures of decorum. Far from accoſting them when they enter his drawing-room, or as they ſurround his billiard table, he frequently turns his back on them at the moment when they are about to pay him their court, or when deſirous of entering into converſation with him. If the French Embaſſador is exempted from ſo humiliating a treatment, he owes it to the neceſſity that Prince Kaunitz feels, of managing in ſome meaſure the repreſentative of a powerful Court, which has connected itſelf by ties of marriage and of policy with Auſtria. But, the preſence of Monſieur de Breteuil impoſes on him no reſtraint whatſoever. In company with the firſt perſons of both ſexes, at his own table, every day, he does not heſitate, after dinner, to paſs at leaſt a quarter of an hour, in the diſguſting occupation of cleaning his teeth, which he performs with all the minute ceremonies of

of the toilet. Perhaps, ſuch an inſult to decency and to good breeding, never was committed in any civilized country. Certainly it is not known elſewhere; and ſuch a practice would have excited aſtoniſhment, mixed with averſion, in Charles the Twelfth himſelf; who, though he was accuſtomed to ſpread his butter with his thumbs, yet never violated wantonly the rules of civility towards ladies. I have been preſent frequently at the ſcene to which I allude, in company with the moſt diſtinguiſhed men and women in Vienna, Auſtrians, as well as foreigners. It is difficult to puſh contempt for all the forms of poliſhed ſociety, to a greater length.

The Auſtrian firſt Miniſter riſes very late, uſually at or nearly about noon; but he tranſacts public buſineſs in bed during the whole morning, where his ſecretaries attend for that purpoſe. At one o'clock he takes chocolate. His hour of dinner is uncertain, varying capriciouſly from four o'clock to five, ſix, and ſeven in the evening; in conſequence of which want of punctuality, all who are

 able,

able, have running footmen ſtationed in the Prince's antichamber, to bring them intimation when he is about to appear. If he accepts an invitation to dine with any perſon, however high his rank, it is only on condition that the wine, bread, and even the water be ſent from his own houſe, and the principal diſhes dreſſed by his cook. A ſtipulation, which, however humiliating, is never refuſed by thoſe who aſpire to the honor of entertaining him. No crowned head in Europe, I believe, exacts ſimilar marks of deference from his Courtiers; nor could Louis the Fourteenth have experienced greater proofs of ſervile reſpect, when he condeſcended to viſit his favorite Miniſters or ſubjects. Naturally chearful, and diſpoſed to the pleaſures of ſociety, Prince Kaunitz nevertheleſs unbends at table. He converſes well on almoſt all topics, reaſons with accuracy, and has a vaſt command of expreſſion. Italian, French, and German, he ſpeaks with no leſs eaſe than fluency; but, French is the language which he uſually talks in company, as being moſt generally underſtood.

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It is indeed rare to hear him utter a word in German; for which, like his Pruſſian Majeſty, he does not ſeem to entertain any predilection. To Italians, of whom there are always many in the Court of Vienna, he never fails to addreſs himſelf in Italian, if they do not poſſeſs French in perfection.

His favorite topics of debate or of converſation, are horſes, mechanics, and carriages. It is ſcarcely poſſible to be a greater Connoiſſeur than he is on theſe ſubjects; and whenever any of them are mentioned, he harangues with no leſs perſpicuity than information. On politics he rarely or never touches; but, on hiſtorical points he is eaſily led out, and diſplays, without affectation, a very extenſive acquaintance with all the great events of modern Europe. If not a man of ſhining talents, he is unqueſtionably poſſeſſed of great enlargement of mind, much application, and ſound judgment, matured by the moſt perfect acquaintance with all the financial and military reſources of the Houſe of Auſtria. Endowed with uncommon penetration, he ſeizes with facility

cility the difficulties of any affair; and never was a head better organized, nor more capable of uniting preciſion with diſpatch, in the tranſaction of public buſineſs.

The wiſdom of his policy in forming an alliance with France, though the part of his adminiſtration of which he is peculiarly vain, is yet very problematical, and time alone can affix to it the indelible ſtamp of excellence or of error. In conſenting to the partition of Poland, he committed an irreparable fault, never to be ſufficiently condemned. Quitting the path of juſtice and of honor, he ſtooped to divide with two other Powers the plunder of a defenceleſs nation, whom in policy he ought to have protected and ſupported againſt every enemy. Caught in the toils ſpread for him by Frederic, a dupe to his own vanity, and deſirous by whatever means to augment the Auſtrian dominions; he already feels, though he may not avow, the pernicious conſequences of his conduct. Pruſſia alone was a real gainer by that tranſaction, where the ſuperior genius of Frederic atchieved more by the

pen,

pen, than he had previoufly done by the fword; in which Auftria was completely over-reached; and to which Ruffia was a reluctant, as well as an involuntary party. It conftitutes the greateft blot in Kaunitz's political character.

His pleafures, at an age fo advanced, can neither be very numerous nor extremely varied. He is fond of Mufic, and likes theatrical entertainments, though he feldom attends them. I have feen him delighted with the "Ombres Chinoifes," when exhibited in a private room, before a felect company. At cards he never plays; but, during the greater part of every evening, he amufes himfelf at billiards, in his own drawing-room. One of his paffions through life, has been architecture, practical as well as theoretical; and it is pretended, that he has not a little impaired his fortune by indulging this propenfity. Certainly he has thrown away immenfe fums, I am told, near a million of florins, or full a hundred thoufand pounds, between his houfe in the fuburbs of Vienna, and his feat at Aufterlitz in Moravia.

Neither of them are yet completed, and he is perpetually pulling down, altering, and repairing. If there is not great exaggeration in these aſſertions, they will explain the reaſon, why, after ſuch a long poſſeſſion of power, he has amaſſed little for his family. Indeed, it would be difficult otherwiſe to account for it, ſince he is not generous; at leaſt not from conſtitution, though he knows how to affect liberality on proper occaſions.

Prince Kaunitz is a good Catholic, but has not any tincture of bigotry or ſuperſtition. I believe he rarely, if ever confeſſes: I know that he never attends, nor hears maſs performed, except on Sundays; and then only for ten minutes, not publickly, but in his own houſe. Superior to the temptation or love of gold, he is not leſs exempt from any ſpirit of vengeance. The natural elevation of his mind raiſes him above Court-cabal, and little miniſterial intrigue. An enemy to every ſpecies of conſtraint, the freedom which he exerciſes himſelf, he extends to thoſe about him: yet, his dignity never forſakes him for a moment.

ment. I have ſeen him in his own drawing-room, as unconcerned, and as attentive to his game at billiards, while the Emperor ſtood on one ſide of him, and the Archduke Maximilian on the other, as if they had both been private individuals of no conſequence. He never appeared to me ſo great as on thoſe occaſions. Towards men of genius, artiſts, and perſons diſtinguiſhed in every line of letters or of ſcience, he is nevertheleſs condeſcending and polite to a high degree. Gluck not only dines frequently at his table; but, I have known the Prince addreſs his diſcourſe to him during the whole repaſt, in a manner the moſt flattering, while he has not noticed the firſt nobility of Vienna ſeated near him. In this part of his character, he ſtands widely oppoſed to the Auſtrian men of rank, who retain many of the prejudices of their anceſtors, and rarely open their houſes to men of merit or talents, unconnected with the advantages of birth.

If flexibility is not to be reckoned among the qualities of Prince Kaunitz, as little

likewiſe

likewiſe is diſſimulation. It forms an inſtance, rare in the hiſtory of the world, and more peculiarly of Courts, that a man of ſuch a caſt, though his abilities may be ever ſo eminent, ſhould have attained to power, and preſerved it for ſo many years. Far from concealing his ſentiments, even on points the moſt delicate, as well as perſonal, he has always expreſſed himſelf with boldneſs. Nothing is better known than his diſlike, I might almoſt ſay his averſion, for the preſent Emperor, when he was Archduke and King of the Romans, before his father's death. The Prince never mentioned his character, conduct, or underſtanding, except with marks of diſapprobation. Even after Joſeph's acceſſion to the Imperial dignity, he did not alter his language. "The "Emperor," ſaid he more than once, "fears me, and I diſlike him." As a protector of the fine arts, and particularly of Muſic, Kaunitz was deeply hurt at the "Ordonnance" which produced the ruin of the Italian opera. The ſpirit of innovation and reform, characteriſtic of all Joſeph's

regulations, by no means ſuited the taſteof the Miniſter. "Je ne vois," ſaid he, "que "des defences de tous cotés." At that time, his Imperial Majeſty never viſited, nor converſed with him: on the contrary, he held Prince Kaunitz in deteſtation.

Inſenſibly, however, their mutual alienation has not only ceaſed, but has been ſucceeded by attachment, eſteem, and confidence. Thoſe ſentiments can ſcarcely be carried to a higher pitch of reciprocal deference and reſpect, than at the preſent moment. How far policy, or views of intereſt on either ſide, may have conduced to operate ſo total a change, it is impoſſible to aſſert. Joſeph, who is unqueſtionably a maſter of diſſimulation, may only wait for the proper moment to manifeſt his real ſentiments. But, people here are univerſally convinced, that no reconciliation was ever more complete. He ſeems never ſatisfied with giving the Prince the moſt flattering teſtimonies of conſideration and perſonal regard. During the courſe of the two laſt winters,

winters, not content with preſenting himſelf at the drawing-room of the firſt Miniſter, Joſeph has often viſited him in his bed-chamber, in order to converſe with him at more eaſe on every ſubject of public import. Theſe interviews have been conducted without ceremony or attendants, and frequently without any previous intimation on the part of the Emperor.

Whenever he has occaſion to mention the Prince's name, it is accompanied with expreſſions of conſideration for his ſervices and virtues. On the anniverſary of his birth, it is cuſtomary for Prince Kaunitz always to dine with his eldeſt ſon, Count Erneſt, and a ſelect party. Upon the ſecond of February, laſt year, which was the day alluded to, the firſt Miniſter went to his ſon's houſe, about half paſt four o'clock. Candles had not been brought in, though it was already duſk; and the company expecting every minute to be ſummoned to table, were converſing in the drawing-room, when the door opened very gently.

gently. A perſon entered, and on his advancing towards the Counteſs Erneſt Kaunitz, they perceived that it was the Emperor. "I am come, Madam," ſaid he, "unaſked, "to eat a part of your dinner. I hope "you will permit me on this day to ſhew "my reſpect, and to pay my compliments "to Prince Kaunitz." He accordingly ſtayed; but, at table he ſat on the Miniſter's right hand, and did not allow of the ſmalleſt diſtinction, conſidering himſelf only as a gueſt. It was difficult for a Sovereign to ſhew a more delicate mark of attention. I received theſe particulars from one of the company.

If Joſeph manifeſts ſo decided an affection for the Prince, the latter now repays it with intereſt, and ſeems to have no more grateful or pleaſing topic of converſation, than the praiſes of his maſter. His filial piety and duty; his unwearied exertions for the grandeur of the Auſtrian Houſe; his readineſs to expoſe his perſon in the field, when his country demands it; each of theſe,

these, and many other of the Emperor's qualities, are the frequent subject of the Minister's eulogium. On the eleventh of April last year, the day when his Majesty set off from Vienna to join the army in Bohemia, Kaunitz launched out at his own table, on the great endowments which meet in Joseph the Second. "L'Empereur," said he several times, "est un vrai heros." It may, nevertheless, be doubted whether, though he admired the hero, he approved the heroism, since the war has never been considered as either agreeable to his wishes, or consonant to his views and policy. Happily for both, it appears now to be drawing to a conclusion, according to every appearance: a subject on which I shall have more to say in my next letter.

LETTER XXXV.

Appointment of the Congreſs at Teſchen, for the concluſion of peace.—Sentiments excited by it at Vienna.—Departure of the Grand Duke of Tuſcany for Florence.—Character of that Prince, and of the Grand Ducheſs of Tuſcany, his wife.—Reflexions on the war occaſioned by the Bavarian ſucceſſion.

VIENNA, *March* 17*th*, 1779.

AT length, after a painful period of ſuſpenſe and anxiety, I think I may announce the approach, if not the certainty of peace. As long ago as the 27th of laſt month, a courier from Breſlaw arrived, with intelligence of all the preliminaries being already adjuſted, and only waiting for ſignature. A congreſs, for ſettling the terms of the definitive treaty, was at firſt fixed to meet at Troppau in Auſtrian Sileſia; but, the little town of Teſchen, capital of the duchy of the ſame name, near the

the frontiers of the Imperial Poland, is ſince ſubſtituted in place of Troppau. As belonging to Prince Albert and the Archducheſs Chriſtina, it may be conſidered a ſort of neutral ſpot, and therefore proper for the meeting of plenipotentiaries. Otherwiſe, a more wretched and deſolate collection of huts, could hardly have been found in any corner of Europe. An armiſtice, preparatory to negotiation, took place on the 8th of the preſent month. The Baron de Breteuil, and Count de Cobenzel, late Envoy Extraordinary at the Court of Berlin, were immediately named to repair to Teſchen, on the part of France and Auſtria. Prince Repnin, and the Baron de Riedazel, Miniſter to the Court of Vienna from his Pruſſian Majeſty previous to the war, are likewiſe appointed on the ſide of Frederic and his Ally, Catharine. But, Count Cobenzel having been unexpectedly ſeized with a fit of the gout, which incapacitated him for travelling; his relation, John Philip Cobenzel, has been ſubſtituted in his place. The French Embaſſador and he ſet off for the

the place of negociation, on the eighth, the day when the armiſtice commenced. The Court of St. James's, which, on former occaſions, might have been called in as mediator, if not as umpire, in the quarrel, is completely excluded, and ſeems to be as little conſidered on either ſide, as the meaneſt Italian Republic. Neither the vigor of our counſels, nor the ſucceſs of our arms at the preſent moment, tend to impreſs Germany and Europe with reſpect.

Notwithſtanding the apparent certainty of peace, great diſcontent prevails in this capital. Not only the mode in which the war has been conducted; the circumſtances likewiſe, under which a Congreſs is about to be opened, excite a degree of ferment approaching to indignation; ſince it is well known, that the Pruſſians ſtill continue in Bohemia. But, neither the Court nor the Cabinet, neither Joſeph nor the Prime Miniſter, ſeem inclined to proſecute hoſtilities. Relative to the terms upon which peace will ultimately be made, we can only con-

jecture: no one here, however, doubts that it muſt be purchaſed by a partial, if not by a total reſtitution, of the territories ſeized on, which occaſioned the rupture. Frederic, ſtrong in the cauſe that he eſpouſes, in the open aid of Saxony, and in the avowed ſupport of Ruſſia, poſſeſſes great advantages over his adverſary. France is neither ſuppoſed to interfere with zeal, in favor of Maria Thereſa and her ſon; nor, embarraſſed as Louis the Sixteenth now is by a war with England, can he, were he even ſo diſpoſed, extend any effectual aſſiſtance to the Empreſs Queen. On the contrary, Catharine, irritated againſt the Auſtrian Miniſter, who, in the affair of the partition of Poland, and on other occaſions, has ſhewn no reſpect for her intereſts, or deference for her wiſhes, acts vigorouſly in favour of Pruſſia. The Princes of the German Empire look on, and enjoy with a malignant pleaſure, the embarraſſments, as well as the humiliation, of the Imperial Cabinet. Under theſe circumſtances, it is probable that the

Court

Court of Vienna will not refuſe to make the ſacrifices, however ample or painful, neceſſary for enſuring peace.

Another event, which confirms the ſuppoſition, is the departure of the Great Duke and Ducheſs of Tuſcany. They doubtleſs delayed it, till the deciſion of ſo great a point, in which Leopold muſt neceſſarily feel himſelf deeply, though not immediately involved. He is in fact the preſumptive, eventual heir, to all the dominions of Maria Thereſa, as long as his elder brother is neither married, nor has any iſſue. On the ſame day when the armiſtice took place, and on which the Auſtrian and French Embaſſadors ſet off for Teſchen, the Great Duke and Ducheſs left Vienna, for Florence. After an affectionate and tender adieu on the part of the Empreſs, they proceeded to Baden, only four leagues diſtant, to which place Joſeph and all the Imperial Family accompanied them. There they dined together, and the two brothers parted, with mutual teſtimonies of affection and re-

 gret.

gret. Maria Therefa's infirmities did not allow her to be of the party.

I have faid little relative to the Great Duke, in any part of thefe Memoirs, becaufe my knowledge of him, perfonal, as well as from report, is neither fo accurate nor fo minute, as refpecting the other members of the Imperial Family. Though he has been here feveral months, I have had comparatively few opportunities of feeing him; neither he nor the Great Duchefs mixing in fociety. He is fix years younger than the Emperor, of a middle fize, well made, and apparently of a more robuft conftitution than Jofeph. Never did two brothers refemble each other lefs in perfon and in manners. Leopold has not either the intelligence of countenance, nor the communicative and affable difpofition of the Emperor. His features, grave and faturnine, are deficient in dignity, as well as in animation. In their baldnefs upon the crown of the head, and in that refpect only, the brothers are alike. Perhaps, a long re-

ſidence in Italy, may have contributed to render the Great Duke more reſerved, than if he had remained in Germany, where the national character is frank and open. It is indiſputable, that he likes Florence better than Vienna; a preference equally natural and pardonable. Independently of local poſition and climate, he is there a Sovereign; here he is only an elevated individual. Though leſs ingratiating than his elder brother, he is beloved and eſteemed by thoſe who enjoy his confidence, and who know how to appreciate his merits. His mind is far more cultivated, likewiſe, by an extenſive acquaintance with polite letters, and even with ſome branches of ſcience. Under a ſerious exterior, he conceals from common eyes the defects, which Joſeph's more unguarded manners expoſe; but, his gallantries have been not leſs general or notorious, than thoſe of any of his predeceſſors of the Houſe of Medicis. In the adminiſtration of Tuſcany, peculiarly in the amelioration of its laws, he is ſaid to

 have

have difplayed application, fteadinefs, and judgment; qualities, which it is probable he may at fome future time, have occafion to exercife on a greater and more confpicuous theatre. Jofeph, whofe intentions not to marry a third time, are well known, regards him as his fucceffor; and the two brothers either feel, or affect to feel, a very warm attachment for each other.

Of the Grand Duchefs, in common with almoft every perfon here, I know ftill lefs from perfonal obfervation, as fhe is hardly ever feen in public; her delicate ftate of health incapacitating her for much exertion or amufement. Daughter of the prefent King of Spain, fhe refembles him in countenance; and no Princefs can have fmaller pretenfions to perfonal beauty, grace, or elegance. Her figure is meagre, her face thin and pale, her complexion fallow, her nofe long, as well as large, and her fight contracted. Nor are her manners better calculated to reprefent the Majefty of the Imperial Throne, which it is poffible

ſhe may one day aſcend; an event that ſhe is ſaid not to contemplate with much complacency, or to anticipate with any impatience. Like her huſband, ſhe is conſidered here as more partial to the Tuſcans, than to the Germans. If ſhe is deficient in perſonal charms, ſhe is not leſs ſo in female accompliſhments. A Neapolitan education, completed in Spain, was probably not very favorable to the diſcloſure or cultivation of her natural endowments. But, every deficiency of an external and ornamental nature, is amply compenſated by the intrinſic worth and ſolid excellence of her character. Devoted to her children and her huſband, beyond whom ſhe knows no object of affection or enjoyment; in them centre all her cares. Domeſtic and retired, ſhe ſhuns public exhibitions, in which neither her health, her turn of mind, nor her manners, enable her to appear with advantage. A numerous family, conſiſting of nine Princes and Princeſſes, by whom the Houſe of Auſtria muſt in all probability

be

be perpetuated, occupy her time, and engrofs her whole attention. Little known beyond the limits of Florence or of Vienna, ſhe is well recompenſed for the want of admiration and celebrity, by the reſpect and attachment of the few, who are acquainted with her virtues.

I am now about to leave this capital, where I have witneſſed the origin, the progreſs, and probably the termination, of the Bavarian quarrel. A rupture of ſuch importance with Pruſſia and Saxony, has awakened the Imperial Court from the long repoſe of fifteen years, which ſucceeded the great war terminated in 1763. Joſeph the Second, and Prince Kaunitz, have found more ſerious occupations for their time, than travelling or building. Frederic, in oppoſing the ambition of the former, has diſcloſed the ſecret and diſcordant ſprings, which actuate the movements of the Auſtrian Cabinet; and has brought forward to the public eye, the three principal perſonages who compoſe it, more than could have been done by a much

longer

longer period of tranquillity. Whatever portion of the Bavarian fucceffion may be retained by Auftria, at the definitive treaty of peace; the effential advantages, as well as the glory, of having taken up arms in defence of the Germanic Syftem, remain with his Pruffian Majefty. If he has not acquired the fame laurels as in former wars, he has not lefs checked the career of Jofeph the Second; and he has proved to Europe at large, that time has not diminifhed his vigilance, nor impaired his exertions. France, however connected by ties of marriage, or of pretended policy, with Maria Therefa, has rather affected to give, than has really extended, any aid to her on the prefent occafion: while Catharine the Second, neither mollified by the advances, nor conciliated by the blandifhments of the Auftrian Cabinet, has interpofed as arbitrefs in the difpute, and compelled the Emprefs Queen to fheathe the fword. Such is, or is about to be, the termination of Jofeph the Second's rafh attempt to appropriate a part of Bavaria. It has

embittered the evening of his mother's reign, without augmenting her glory, or raiſing her reputation; though it may poſſibly add ſomewhat to the extent of her dominions. As I am on the point of ſetting out for Venice, I ſhall not however witneſs the final treaty, which, while it determines that point, will reſtore tranquillity to this part of Europe.

I remain, &c. &c.

THE END.

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